THE COMMONWEAL

A Weekly Review of Literature, The Arts and Public Affairs

Volume XVIII | Friday, October 27, 1933 | Number 26

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Previous issues of THE COMMONWEAL are indexed in the *Reader's Guide* and the *Catholic Periodical Index*.

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Publication office, 34 N. Crystal St., East Stroudsburg, Pa. Executive offices, Grand Central Terminal, New York, N. Y. United States: $5.00; Foreign: $6.00; Canada: $5.50. Single copies: $.10.

POWER FOR PEACE

IT IS clear that one definite point of great importance has emerged from the confusion and alarm produced by Hitler's action in taking Germany out of the Disarmament Conference, and out of the League of Nations. This point is the clearly indicated determination of the United States government to hold aloof from the purely political complications of the situation. The United States is represented in Geneva for one purpose only, at present, namely, to aid in any practical plan which will bring about some definite amount of real disarmament. But there is no intention, no desire, to become involved in a new European war, the frightful shadow of which now broods over the Continent, from the Russian borders to France and Belgium once more. With impressive unanimity, the press of the entire country has expressed what undoubtedly is the general conviction of the people of the United States.

Everything that our government, and leaders of public opinion, can do to help in the restoration of the Disarmament Conference, and to avert the threatened disaster of war, will certainly be done; but there is a line to be drawn; indeed, the statements of our government have already drawn that line, over which the American nation is determined not to step. That line is armed intervention in another European war. It is best for all peoples concerned in the present crisis that this should be clearly understood.

The first staggering effects of the blow struck by Hitler, with typical arrogance and recklessness, at the already weakened structure of international coöperation, have been only slightly offset by the events which followed that drastic measure. Certainly, even to postpone the crisis, which must come again when the nations still participating in the Disarmament Conference will be obliged to answer Hitler collectively, is worth while. Hasty action even in the direction of a measure of reconciliation with the new Germany, or the proposal of some plan which would permit the renewal of specific proposals, are dangerous. But hasty action to impose forcible solutions to the deadlock would be fatal. For war is no solution of any international problem. It is only one more link in a chain of disaster.

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What is appalling beyond adequate description is to watch the swift growth of the acceptance of blind fatalism instead of faith on the part of vast multitudes of men and women, not only in ravaged, soul-sickened Europe, but even here in the United States. This mood is crystallized in the phrase which writer after writer, speaker after speaker, in public or private discussion, is using: "Another world war is inevitable." Such a mood is the blank negation of all religion, even of all humanity. It denies not only the providence of Almighty God, but also all belief in the free will of man. It places at the very center of life not even a blind, incalculable, mechanical or biological force, but something worse—a malignant will for destruction. Against such a mood, only one thing can prevail. Mankind must deny the worship of doom. It must free itself from such a slavery of the soul. It must deny the lie of fatalism. It must assert the truth that it is free. It is free to choose; it is not bound to drift supinely with the tide of despair which has been let loose in the world by mankind's own abandonment, in such tremendous numbers, of a faith in God.

This is why every religious body in our land, and all individuals who possess religious faith, must absolutely refuse allegiance to fatalism. War is not inevitable. Peace can be made a reality. Belief in the positive power of moral and spiritual power must be not only maintained but exerted actively. Let the cynics laugh at peace meetings, and condemn their futility, if they please. It is tragically true that the very words, "conference" and "convention," have become associated with lamentable failure upon failure. But what were the conferences and the conventions which have failed? For the most part they were gatherings of statesmen, or politicians, or diplomats, or business or legal experts, so called, who went into such meetings as the Economic Conference, or the Disarmament Conference, not only divided into groups of national or economic interests at war with each other, but individually unsettled and uncertain of purpose. They felt obliged to serve, not merely two, but three or four, masters. Many of them possessed a sincere desire to work for the common good of all nations; but then there was the particular claim of their own nation; and the claim of a certain section, or interest, within that nation against other parts not only of their own nation, but of other nations as well. Hence, failure after failure. Precious time wasted in endless discussions of details, and a neglect of first principles. But are dictators to be preferred even to these vacillating politicians and economic and legal experts? Is the spectacle of Lenin, and Hitler, and Mussolini, a revelation of hope to Americans? Shall we not rather stir up our own faith in the essential sanity and virtue and value of democratic liberty, and join to that faith good works that will really be practical?

In Philadelphia next month, centering on Armistice Day—and well we know now that the world is still under a most uneasy and unstable armistice, rather than in a state of peace—the eighteenth annual meeting of the World Alliance for International Friendship through the Churches, and the Good-Will Congress, will be held. Protestants, Catholics and Jews are represented in the direction and the action of this powerful implement of peace. We bespeak for its efforts the widest and most effective sort of Catholic coöperation. We Catholics are proud of the place won in the peace movement by the Pope who was tested by the World War, Benedict XV, and we rejoice in the leadership of our present Chief Bishop, Pius X. We should, for that reason, and because it is also plain, human, common sense, join with other religious people in the war against war. In this conference, there is no serving of purely nationalistic, or economic, special interest. The ideal of the common welfare, the good of humanity, is the ruling principle. But it is not mere humanitarianism. It is not simply the service of men. It is not believed by this group that man is sufficient to himself. It is not merely the brotherhood of man that brings this group together—it is the acknowledgement and the service of the Fatherhood of God. And that fact makes all the difference between futility and achievement. This sort of conference really exerts a power.

WEEK BY WEEK

WE STILL think that it was principally poker-playing at Geneva. A game of "freeze-out" is the best description of it. The powers party to the Versailles Treaty had Germany's watch, coat and vest, as regards armament, and they were unwilling to let her toss an I.O.U. into the pot and keep on playing. Germany is out. There can be no question by any realistic observer of that. Like any normal loser, she hates to admit that she is out, even to herself. Her storm troops are only scowls; they are not really serious, except as they threaten the peace of defenseless citizens at home. As a war threat, they are simply cannon fodder for the iron ring of nations around Germany equipped with the latest developments in machines for dealing death, and plenty of them, and plenty of trained mechanics for operating the machines. The disavowals by Germany's leaders of her warlike intention can be taken as a recognition of their position. The war in Europe that has been conducted silently since 1918 would seem to be now almost consummated. Like the war from 1914 to 1918, after the rapid movements of the first year, it settled down to a

More or Less Arms

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war of attrition, a case of digging in, holding on to every inch and waiting for the other fellow to tire first. There have been many star shells of beautiful sentiments lighting the dark skies over Europe and, while pretty, they have had little effective relation to the struggle on the ground. Stresemann's memoirs perhaps most frankly demonstrated that the generalissimos of the forces involved since 1918 had a perfectly natural interest in taking something home to the wife and kiddies, behind their set or hard-smiling faces at the round table while they "hiked" or "passed" in pleasantly modulated voices.

THIS is not a statement of cynicism or hopelessness. Our leading editorial expresses our firm faith in the leaven of men and women of good-will who will preserve peace on earth. Again we emphasize that though Christendom was the greatest force for international civilized action, our common Christianity was notably unrepresented at the conferences for peace and disarmament. It would, of course, be unjust to say that Mr. Henderson's outline of the steps necessary to achieve disarmament, which we gave in our last issue, was prompted solely by an ulterior plan to drive the best possible bargain for Great Britain. Conferees no doubt do have their moments of vision of what the common weal might be; what they do not have is a philosophy of self-discipline and self-restraint. They have rather a simple faith in helping themselves to material advantage. If this can be achieved by coöperation, they are for it; but the idea of sacrificing themselves for coöperation is not in their ideology; it has no *raison d'être;* within the limits of their philosophy it would be only foolish self-denial. So we have the endless, overt and subtle, struggles for local advantages. What cannot be expected, except by children who still preserve the sense that after some particular event everything will change and be wonderfully different, is that there will be any marked alteration in the world with Germany out of the League and out of the Disarmament Conference at Geneva. The conferring will go on week after week and the struggle for power, and, in proportion to the faith and hope and charity of individual men and women uniting them in a supernatural congress all over the world, we will have our deserts in peace or lack of it.

THE PROBLEM of strikes which is a formidable one facing our National Recovery Administration is to be dealt with at some length by THE COMMONWEAL in a series of articles which is announced elsewhere. Labor disputes, we might recall meanwhile, have been characteristic of the end of depressions in the past and there is therefore some reason for looking on them with less than extreme repugnance. They are a sign of vitality and of there being something worth struggling for. There is a peace which comes of apathy and despair as well as a peace which comes of a high degree of common purpose and coöperation. As Senator Wagner has pointed out, however, strikes are destructive not only of the income of the strikers during the period of their idleness and of the return to the owners on their plants and investments, but also of the real wealth available to the general public. And as General Johnson—poor General Johnson, what a staggering burden of responsibilities that man is carrying on his shoulders!—has declared in his address to the American Federation of Labor, if labor sabotages the national recovery by unreasonable and intemperate strikes, the nation inevitably will turn to the extreme right or the extreme left and either of these would result in the destruction of the freedom of the American laboring man to work for and decide his own fate.

Strikes and Recovery

INTRANSIGENCE by the "hard-boiled" type of industrialists or mill owners will be equally disastrous in preventing a moderate solution of the inevitable conflict of self-interests in our national family. As we have repeatedly said, without claiming any great degree of originality, a rational and orderly system for the settlement of these things is necessary. Such a system, we believe, the NRA and the National Labor Board under Senator Wagner provide. We are just emerging from anarchy in industry and it is not to be thought that success in the orderly government of economics will be absolute any more than success in the orderly control of other social relations by government is absolute. There will always remain some hard heads that will have to be whacked, of individuals who believe that the only way to get anything in this world is by being tough and plug-ugly. No walk of life has a monopoly on this kind or is completely free of them. Settlement of the Weirton Steel Company's strike by the Labor Board was a major triumph for law, and for more than law, for justice, in the face of apparent intransigence. That the settlement may not be permanent, that bitter conflict may again break out there, will be no more an indication of failure or inefficiency of the Labor Board than if the police courts of our country should fail to stop crime throughout the land between now and a week from Sunday. What is constantly amazing is the number of individuals whose personal fortunes suffered most during the period of unrestrained competition, who have seen family estates built up by years of hard work and sound management reduced in many cases to liabilities, who are most active in their distrust of anything except the old economic anarchy and unrestrained financial plundering by the strongest and most unscrupulous.

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MORE than half a million men and women returned to work during September, it has just been announced by Secretary of Labor Perkins. Thus was continued for six successive months a steady rise in payrolls and employment from the low point of March. Since March more than 2,700,000 workers have been saved from the hell of unemployment and there has been a gain of $64,000,000 in weekly wages, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. "Approximately $10,000,000 more was paid out in weekly pay envelopes in September than in August," Secretary Perkins reports. The increases which took place in September were above the average for the same month for the preceding ten years, and this gain over normal seasonal increases Secretary Perkins attributed to the application of the NRA codes. Among the professions and the higher paid classes of workers it is not unusual to hear complaints that so far no appreciable benefits of the Recovery Act have been felt. There can be no doubt that for them this is so and it may be expected that they will even suffer, at least for a time, from rising prices. Where the appreciable benefits are coming, however, is where they are most desperately needed, among those great numbers who make the average of national family income around a thousand dollars a year and somehow manage to keep a decent home and raise a family on such an income. Increases in sales reported by chain stores and others having the cheaper lines of commodities, are proportionately greater than the increases reported by department stores, and this bears out that the infantry of our social order are having the means of acquiring the necessities of life restored to them. This is an essential foundation on which may be built in time improvements in our American standards of living that are above the level of stark, grim necessity. Anything else would have been building on misery that would have exploded and destroyed more than it is easy to imagine.

Gains in Employment

IT IS a sorry spectacle to which the citizens of New York have just been treated by two of the mayoralty candidates and one of the foremost leaders of Jewish opinion, who is also a very prominent lawyer. In view of the zeal with which all three have lent themselves to the business of fomenting civic division by stirring up racial anger, it hardly matters who took the initial step. But it seems to us that the situation calls for two very definite remarks, which we make with the strictest impersonality. The first is on the head of the fact that Mr. McKee's article on Jews, which both Mr. LaGuardia and Mr. Untermeyer profess to find a shocking insult to that race, was written exactly eighteen years ago. In the name of common sense and decent amity, we ask these two gentlemen to try to realize how vicious this precedent of theirs would operate. Can they not understand that if we are to live in our mixed communities with any real union and good-will, we will have to take men as they show themselves to be day by day, and count ourselves lucky if they show themselves to be our friends? A man who acts with positive and substantial friendliness toward the members of another race, as Mr. McKee has long admittedly done toward the Jews, will not be cited for any defensible purpose for an opinion he uttered eighteen years ago.

Deplorable All Around

OUR SECOND remark, which likewise is offered on the basis not of partizanship but of principle, is on the head of Mr. McKee's article itself. In it he asserts that a very high percentage of Jewish public school students shake off the lofty ethics of orthodox Judaism and become materialists and radicals. He may be right, he may be wrong; but how can he be charged with being anti-Semitic? Not everyone who criticizes Jews is anti-Semitic—not even everyone who criticizes them unjustly. Mere adverse criticism, ranging all the way from respectful and reasoned strictures to the irrationalities of personal dislike, is surely a universal practice and a universal right. All races, without exception, become, upon occasion, the targets for these strictures and dislikes; and, incidentally, no member of any race so treated does it a service by displaying a violent sense of injury. If Mr. Untermeyer feels that Mr. McKee judged his people wrongly eighteen years ago, an adult toleration and magnanimity in setting him right would be fine and useful; the resentful denunciations with which the newspapers are ringing, convey not so much that Mr. McKee was very mistaken as that Mr. Untermeyer is very touchy. But the main point is the actual test of anti-Semitism, which is the same as the test of anti-anything-else's principle and good-will. A man who is willing to penalize another in his human rights because of membership in a certain race, is an enemy of that race. That is the only test; and to claim more is to claim, not human rights but special privileges.

ONE OF Chicago's municipal judges, Thomas A. Green, who speaks with a good deal of authority on the subject of criminals, since he presides over the world's largest criminal court, has made public some opinions with which we nevertheless venture to disagree. The Associated Press quotes him as endorsing the opinion of H. L. Mencken that habitual criminals should be hanged; and also as advocating that films of actual hangings be shown to first offenders to discourage repeating. The first suggestion seems

In the Negative

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to run counter to the lesson taught by the history of crime and punishment, but the temper of our people renders it merely academic; a national group which, in large numbers, opposes capital punishment for murderers, will not generally support the extension of that punishment to lesser criminals. But the second suggestion of Judge Green sounds practical enough to be tried, and hence a word in the negative may be useful. We would earnestly advise against correction, especially of young offenders, by fright and horror, which is what this idea means. Fright and horror have a way of recoiling, as history also teaches. Because of the very violence of the emotions they elicit, they produce saturation more rapidly than almost any other stimuli. And when this happens, your subject becomes a problem indeed. Surely it is manifest that the argument is all against making a potential young desperado too familiar with the details of crime's final penalty. When it is no longer dread and mysterious to him, he is overwhelmingly likely to become wholly insensitive to its meaning, or to respond to it with vindictiveness or bravado. The only safe way to discourage repeaters is to give them a whole pattern of life: religious training first of all; an environment of at least minimum decency; a chance to earn a living as free men; and a certainty of working justice, of swift and sure punishment for the real doers of evil.

Farewell to Luxury Liners?

STRICTLY speaking, of course, the only social defense of the out-size, super-speedy ocean passenger boat is that it minimizes seasickness and gets you there in a hurry. Actually, it is a floating cargo of swank, worse even than one of the expensive cosmopolitan hotels, for the fine and rigid discipline of the sea seems somehow to be employed to bolster up its preposterous Roman-Empire luxury and to enhance, by its own special tone, the gilded distinctions accorded to those who prove their worth by buying a first-class ticket. But for all of that, there has been real romance in the growth of the ocean liners, in which, for years, Great Britain has taken the lead. British shipping now openly confesses that it is feeling the increasing rivalry of ships like the Bremen, the Europa, the Rex, especially since business trips have lessened with the improvement in direct transatlantic communication, and the need for economy has cut down the "carriage trade." They feel, to an even greater degree, the inroads made by the cabin boats, which, with smaller size and less speed, have been able to offer rates that capture more and more travelers. "Important elements" in British marine circles are pressing hard for the building of these boats, and the abandonment of the ever more costly North Atlantic liner competition. If they prevail, as seems likely, the effect of the decision is bound to spread. It may open a new democratic chapter in passenger traffic for the entire world.

Shooting Stars

SOMEWHERE out in space an unidentified comet apparently exploded and the earth, plunging along in its course, swept into the path of the cosmic stones and dust. The meteoric shower that startled the countries of western and central Europe on October 9 was the result. In this shower there was no noticeable radiant as is commonly observed in the showers that are fixed occurrences during the year, such as the fiery tears of Saint Lawrence from August 10 to 12, or the Leonids from November 14 to 16. It was conjectured, therefore, that the burst occurred somewhat near the time and place of the earth's catching up with the particles. In Belgium observers reported seeing between sixty to seventy falling stars per minute over a period of two hours. Their trajectories in most cases were short, indicating that they were comparatively small and quickly burned out in their passage through the earth's atmosphere at speeds which have been estimated to range from 10 to 40 miles a second—a respectable speed for solids in our relatively dense air. German observatories counted 200 showers in fifteen minutes. In Portugal there was considerable terror among the populace who were reported to have rushed into the streets. From Harvard subsequently came word that Dr. W. J. Fisher of the Observatory identified the shower with the Giacobini Zinner comet which was discovered in 1900, rediscovered in 1913, seen again in 1926 and reported observed in May of this year by Hamburg Observatory. Evidently it will remain to be seen whether we have simply passed through the tail of this comet or whether it has completely disintegrated into cosmic débris.

THE ROCKEFELLER REPORT

FEW, IF any, more timely practically useful acts of public service have ever been performed in the field of social research than the study, sponsored by John D. Rockefeller, jr., of the problem of liquor control. The study was conducted by Raymond S. Fosdick and Albert L. Scott, and will be published in book form under the title, "Toward Liquor Control." Presented to the public in brief summaries of various points, through the daily press, during the last fortnight, the report already has attracted wide attention. The effect which Mr. Rockefeller's tremendous personal influence had upon the trend of public opinion in regard to the failure of prohibition is a matter of history. A similar effect will probably follow from the study of the present report. Its wide research in the fields of European and Canadian experiments with the vast social problems in-

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volved in the liquor traffic is supplemented by a sanity of spirit and a human reasonableness in presenting its suggestions and conclusions which are most helpful.

In his personal statement which prefaced the publication of the various summaries, Mr. Rockefeller candidly acknowledged that he considered the failure of the Eighteenth Amendment regrettable, for it is his own "earnest conviction that total abstinence is the wisest, best and safest position for both the individual and society." But he recognizes "the fact that the majority of the people of this country are not yet ready for total abstinence, at least when it is attempted through legal coercion. The next best thing—many people think it is a better thing—is temperance. Therefore, as I sought to support total abstinence when its achievement seemed possible, so now and with equal vigor I would support temperance."

Most Catholics, we think, would be found among those who think that temperance, if not "better," morally speaking, than total abstinence, is certainly more natural, more normal, as a general rule, than total abstinence. The long history of Christian peoples is closely associated with the culture of the grape, and with the general, popular, temperate use of beer and wine. Throughout the whole of that history, intemperance in the use of the gifts of nature has been condemned and punished by the Church. For certain classes of mankind, including the very weak, and the very strongest, total abstinence has been fostered. Ascetics have voluntarily abstained from drinking, as they abstained from any other things, good, or morally indifferent in themselves, for the sake of discipline, or to make reparation for the sins of others. But that true temperance is the best method, in the matter of drinking alcoholic beverages of all sorts, for the mass of society, would seem to be not only a truly Christian view, but likewise a matter of common sense. It is a very enheartening thing to witness the return of common sense to the nation as a whole. But if temperance is really to be given, and to hold, its proper place in the national life, there will have to be a frank facing up to the many grave problems, which the passing of prohibition will create, on the part of all those who are the friends and supporters of temperance.

As the Rockefeller report points out, thoughtful people will "view with legitimate apprehension any new attempt at liquor regulation. After a thirteen-year trial of national prohibition, the pendulum has swung violently toward toleration. The influence of this new attitude is bound to affect the legislation in each of the forty-eight states." Yet it is certain that if the manifest evils which prohibition wrought became intolerable, the nation cannot tolerate other evils which the return of the liquor traffic will inevitably bring, unless wise and reasonable control of that traffic can be speedily and effectively set up.

We cannot afford to forget how brewers and distillers, and a large number of saloon keepers—not universally, it is true, but in far too great and too powerful combinations—corrupted local and state governments in the interests of their own pockets. As the Rockefeller report points out, "as late as 1915 the organized liquor traffic tried to blacklist forty-nine American firms, including railroads and manufacturing concerns, which in the interests of efficiency had forbidden their employees the use of intoxicants while on duty." Personal liberty is a human right, not a mere privilege. Its violation by the Eighteenth Amendment was justly resented. But that men responsible for the running of railroads had—and will have again—a right to require employees not to drink while engaged in duties which involve the lives of the public, can hardly be denied, save by fanatics. Yet this perfectly reasonable exercise of legitimate caution was savagely assailed by profit-thirsty liquor sellers. Mr. Rockefeller is right. We must not return to that sort of anarchy.

That the basis of liquor control must be to eliminate private profit, is strongly in the report, and it is this conclusion which will arouse the strongest opposition. A state monopoly is proposed, as against the license system to private dealers. "The issuance of liquor licenses to private dealers," the report says, "presupposes the right to make a living by the sale of liquor. Since his livelihood is at stake, the private seller always has been and always will be interested in sales, and nothing but sales." Yet even in advancing its thesis in favor of a state monopoly of liquor selling, the report does not represent a narrowly doctrinaire point of view. It says: "Our recommendation in regard to state control of stronger alcoholic beverages (wine and beer are excepted from this control) may appear to some too bold and idealistic an experiment in governmental operation. We firmly believe, however, that any system of control which does not attack the private profit motive in the sale of spirits is merely touching the problem at its fringe. Unless we eliminate the incentive behind the stimulation of sale, we have not dug to the root of the difficulty; and the weeds of abuse will thrive no matter how we hack at the tops." Nevertheless, "in making a recommendation for a state authority we do not wish to appear dogmatic or intolerant of other control devices that may be suggested. In a country as large as ours, with so great a variety of local conditions, there is room for many types of experiment. Indeed, the forty-eight states will constitute a social science laboratory in which different ideas and methods can be tested, and the exchange of experience will be infinitely valuable for the future."

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RETURN OF THE DIPLOMAT

By HENRY CARTER

Additional force is given to the argument of this article, favoring the restoration of the traditional methods of diplomacy by nations dealing with their common problems, since it was written, by the withdrawal of Germany from the Disarmament Conference. THE COMMONWEAL *does not associate itself fully with the view that the League of Nations has utterly failed. Some forum for the open discussion of world problems, even if such a forum lacks the ability to enforce decisions, seems to be necessary.—The Editors.*

AMONG the truisms which have gained wide circulation in recent months is the view that the world is witnessing a fresh and virulent outburst of nationalism in its most extreme form. Of this, of course, the two most striking recent examples have been the Hitlerite revolution in Germany with its fanatical emphasis on nationalistic aims, and the decision of the United States to seek in a policy of economic self-sufficiency the answer to the problems of a world depression. These are however only the newest evidences of a trend which has been steadily in progress since the war, and before, regardless of the implicit dangers of nationalism as revealed in that cataclysm. It is a process which has included the Russian dictatorship and Five-Year Plan; the rise of Mussolini and the Fascist corporative state; French intransigence on the subject of security and her free hand in Europe; the rise and fall of the Rivera régime in Spain; the formation of the national government in England and the formulation of the Ottawa agreements; and, more sinister, the Japanese career of conquest in the Far East.

It is to be noted that in each of these phenomena the establishment of a strong central government or dictatorship has gone hand in hand with an ebullition of national patriotism and of nationalistic aspirations, in short, of nationalism in its most egocentric and unadorned form. To some extent this is attributable to the fact that a dictator must depend upon the emotional support of his subjects for his continuance in power, and to that end must inevitably play upon that most inflammable of political passions, national patriotism. The present-day rulers of the world have been apt practitioners in that art and have little to learn from Machiavelli's advice to his Prince to turn to foreign adventure as a means of strengthening his position at home. Yet despite the effect of patriotic and nationalistic propaganda, which is considerable, it by no means accounts for the whole picture of the world today, for it is likewise fair to infer that the emergence of a dictator is predicated upon a definite, if inarticulate, urge on the part of a people for an expression of their own innate nationalistic aspirations, and that he who most completely expresses those, whether for good or ill, is most apt to find and hold supreme power. The circle of dictatorship and nationalism is a closed one, and it is difficult, and unimportant, to determine which is the egg and which the chicken.

Whether we like it or not, the world is at present made up of a collection of highly self-conscious and emotionally self-sufficient political entities known as states, whose entire *raison d'être* is to survive as such and to find their place in the sun, regardless of the rights or desires of similar entities to do the same.

The historian will recall that the modern state as such sprang from the wreckage and confusion of the long struggle between the Papacy and the Holy Roman Empire for universal supremacy in Europe, and that it offered then the only apparent alternative to the ravages of the perpetual wars, public, private, feudal, religious, personal, political, racial, acquisitive, which had made most of Europe a desert. Strong centralized governments arose finally to subdue unruly subjects, and while wars continued—as they have ever since—their effect was to some extent localized, or at least regularized, by entrusting their conduct solely to the recognized authorities of the state. Life and property became a little safer, law and order a little more recognizable. It was no accident that it was this period which gave birth to the formation of what has since been known as international law, notably in Grotius's epochal work, "De Jure Belli ac Pacis," nor that with the emergence of strong recognized and recognizable states there began to evolve the first systematic method of political intercourse between nations which has become known as diplomacy.

Looking about the world today one cannot but be struck by the historical parallel, however fallacious historical parallels may be as guides to present action. Political internationalism has broken down, as had then the internationalism of Papacy and Empire; strong integrated states have emerged from the welter of confused ideals of democracy as a basis for world peace; nationalism, and talk of war, or of places in the sun, are in the air; and if one seeks for a second Grotius he can do worse than turn to the recent writings of John Bassett Moore. There is, if you like, a bodily resurrection today of the sixteenth-century doctrine of state sovereignty in its most extreme and uninhibited form, with nations playing the rôle and assuming the manners and methods of the most absolute of monarchs.

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The immediate aspects of the present era are presented in its instinctive turnings toward strong central government and dictatorship as a way out of the disasters of war and peace which have beset it, and in the eclipse of the League of Nations and of the ideal of internationalism: the failure of the Disarmament Conference and the collapse of the London Economic Conference merely point the moral of the tale. Of deeper significance are the ever-mounting barriers to trade, the struggle for markets, the renewal of the race in land and naval armaments, the demands of an hysterical but essentially outraged Germany, the Japanese advance into Asia. The old days are back, and with them the unabashed pursuit of nationalist aims throughout the world; fresh alliances are being formed and re-formed; fresh intrigues are afoot; and in all this the historic engine of national policy and of international intercourse is being retuned as the diplomats return to their traditional position of influence and power, and as the chancelleries of the world strip for action as in the days of the Seven Years' War and of Bismarck.

Ever since 1914 diplomacy has rightly or wrongly borne the stigma either of a futility or of a calculated and conscienceless deceit and treachery which is popularly supposed to have precipitated the World War. President Wilson in his excoriations of the old secret diplomacy pleaded dramatically for "open covenants openly arrived at" that the world might be safe for democracy. Beyond doubt the old diplomacy had its many and grievous faults including the unforgivable one of stupidity and beyond doubt it had much for which to answer. Much was hoped for through its displacement by the Wilsonian formula. Unfortunately human nature remained much the same, and the new open diplomacy somehow did not seem to work: it began to appear that the open methods of democracy were not entirely applicable to the delicate processes of international intercourse. Even at Versailles it became necessary to abandon open sessions and to apply the secret and high-handed methods of the old diplomacy if any result at all was to be reached. Nevertheless, open diplomacy lived on in the League of Nations idea and attained its apotheosis in the grandiose projects of Geneva for universal disarmament and in the Kellogg Treaty. Significantly it made no serious attempt to correct the injustices and inequities of the peace treaties, reparations were settled through conventional diplomatic procedure, while its accomplishments in the field of disarmament proved largely illusory if not farcical. Then confronted by a ruthless and determined Japan the open diplomacy of Wilson and of his spiritual heir Ramsay MacDonald, of Kellogg and Stimson, collapsed into ineffectual and undignified blusterings; causes for war multiplied and war scares arose with a pre-war frequency; suspicions, hatreds and distrusts between nations produced an atmosphere in which the advent of a Hitler in Germany became *ipso facto* a menace to world peace. Its prestige hopelessly shattered, the *coup de grace* was mercifully and effectively administered by President Roosevelt's message to London which broke up the Economic Conference and which, one may hope, has ended the era of press agentry and ballyhoo that flourished under the name of the new diplomacy.

Yet, by and large, the desire of the nations is for peace, if peace may be had with some degree of comfort and honor; and that peace has on the whole been maintained since 1919, excepting such matters as the Russo-Polish War of 1920, the Greco-Turkish War of 1921-1922, the Sino-Russian conflict of 1929, and the Sino-Japanese embroglio of 1931-1932, is attributable to that desire rather than to any formal mechanism, be it League or Kellogg Treaty, for the maintenance of peace. Furthermore it is not unreasonable to infer that when and where wars have been averted, it has been essentially by directly interested nations acting in their traditional diplomatic and national rôles, as in the Sino-Russian hostilities of 1929, rather than by any world peace machinery or mobilization of the public opinion of the world, if indeed it can be granted that such a thing exists. National differences are composed, not under the fierce light of publicity which beats upon Geneva and upon conference halls, but by negotiators of the powers concerned meeting and working in decent privacy and keeping their counsel to themselves. For all its sins, the old diplomacy prevented the outbreak of a general war in Europe for a century, and the diplomatic archives of pre-war Europe reveal that it developed a very definite ability in localizing and terminating such wars as irrepressibly broke out from time to time in that tangled Continent. It did not do this by denying the existence of legal war or by calling in the whole world to share its labors.

It is true that great wars seem destined to have as their aftermath a prolonged series of full-dress conferences of varying degrees of futility; post-Napoleonic Europe suffered no less from this plague than has our own age until England pricked the bubble of the Holy Alliance. It is likewise true that international conferences occasionally have accomplished something, witness the peace treaties, the naval conferences, and the conferences called in 1924, 1929 and 1931 to consider the matter of German reparations; but it is likewise true that unless they are assembled to register a decision already agreed upon after due diplomatic preparation, or to recognize an already existing fact, their outcome is more apt than not to be one of disillusionment, acrimony and failure, if not a direct straining of international relations. Sometimes at such gatherings a Briand

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and a Stresemann can meet quietly over their wine and map out a Locarno agreement, or a Litvinoff can pave the way to a resumption of Russo-American relations, but such accomplishments lie off the record and might equally well have been reached in the pleasanter atmosphere of a European spa, as in the halcyon days of before the war.

Both the new diplomacy and the conference method seem now definitely outmoded, particularly since the London fiasco. The question arises, "What is to take their place?" The answer is, "Nothing." Instead, the increasing tendency is to rely upon the efficacy of national action as a means to national political and economic salvation and upon a renewed and intensified use of the traditional tools and weapons of diplomacy.

Diplomacy is, in its simplest terms, merely a means of giving effect to national policy, as it affects other nations, through recognized and unquestioned channels. Where policy is a matter of acts rather than words, it is the function of diplomacy so to guide and represent those acts as best to serve national interest and prestige, and to lessen the impact upon them of the conflicting or opposing policies of other nations. Its position is that of an adviser and advocate, its spring of action must always lie in the will of the chief of state, whether that be king, dictator, president, premier or legislature. It is a method rather than a mechanism of foreign offices and ambassadors; indeed some of its most effective agents have held no official position: the name of Colonel House comes to mind. Skilful personal negotiation and representation are its tools, tact where needed, patience always; above all it must be able to work in privacy at will, beyond the reach of popular passions.

Signs do not lack that President Roosevelt has set his international course: the departure from gold, the new deal legislation, and his open refusal to compromise American interests at the London Conference, all mark it beyond questioning as one of national self-sufficiency and economic nationalism. Nor is this nationalism confined to the realms of commerce and finance. The American navy is being built up to treaty strength and our industries and economic system are being reorganized upon what amounts to a war footing. For all our soft words, we are carrying a big stick. Such a policy calls for an able and more than adequate diplomacy if it is to avoid grave obstacles and perils from abroad, and the President has recognized that need by placing in the State Department some of the most adequate and able of his bright young men—the best will be none too good. The object to be attained is not one of diplomatic miracles nor of spectacular "diplomatic victories," which as Lord Salisbury once pointed out leave abiding and dangerous resentments, but it is that of the realistic protection and advancement of American aims and interests, and of the enhancement of American self-respect at home and prestige abroad. How diplomacy can attain this end is well illustrated in our recent successful friendly mediation in the Cuban situation. The realistic course will not always be popular in Europe nor in our own internationally minded circles—it is the business of our diplomatists to make it respected. Their burden and responsibility is not a light one. It is one which few American diplomatists have had to bear in recent years. On it depends to a degree perhaps not yet apparent the successful carrying out of the new deal experiment free from foreign interference or influence. *Realpolitik* calls for nerve and skill; it is not easy to attain the ideal of Disraeli's phrase: "Peace with Honor."

CHRISTOPHER DAWSON

By EDWARD I. WATKIN

BORN at Hay Castle on October 12, 1889, descended on his father's side from a Yorkshire family, on his mother's (née Miss Bevan) of Welsh descent, Christopher Dawson inherited on both sides the preëminently gracious and cultured tradition of the Anglican country gentlemen of which he writes in his essay, "The World Crisis and the English Tradition," published in his latest volume, "Enquiries." And in that culture he grew up, those all-important formative years of childhood passed in a home where every detail was steeped in its spirit. The setting of his father's house, Hartlington Hall, Burnsall, on a hill above a tributary stream of the Wharfe, where the softer beauty of the lower grass slopes is framed by vast expanses of moorland, seems to me typical of the spirit of that cultured tradition—a fair civility of learning and gentle manners embedded in and supported by the infinite prospect of religious faith. Not from books—though he was brought up among books and from boyhood has been an ardent reader—but from intimate personal experience Mr. Dawson has learned the meaning and value of a social tradition, a culture inspired by religion, a religion-culture to use his own term. If in the course of thought and study he has been led to exchange the provincial Christianity of Anglicanism for the complete and universal Christianity of the Catholic Church, it has been a development, not a de-

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nial. He has rejected only the limitations of Anglicanism. The positive truth and the distinctive beauty of traditional Anglicanism remain dear to a spirit formed and nourished by it, and in Catholicism he sees the unacknowledged foundation and the fulfilment of values which from their very partiality cannot survive the assaults of a hostile order of thought and life.

Mr. Dawson was educated first at a preparatory school near Rugby, Bilton Grange, then at Winchester, the most religious and traditional of the great English public schools, later at a private tutor's in Bedfordshire, the Reverend C. H. Moss of Bletsoe, where I first met him and our lifelong friendship began, and finally at Trinity College, Oxford. When he was a boy of thirteen or fourteen, the writings of Catholic saints and mystics mediated throughout the Anglo-Catholic tradition made a profound, indeed an indelible, impression on Mr. Dawson's mind. A brief period of doubt followed. But the sense of religious need remained vivid, and Mr. Dawson rethought (if I may so put it) his path to the Christian faith of childhood. But he could not stop half way. The inevitable logic of dogmatic Christianity urged him step by step to the Catholic Church. A visit to Rome at the age of nineteen opened his eyes to a living Catholic tradition and culture based on an inspired mystical spirituality. Finally the Bible brought home with overwhelming force the supernatural economy of the Church. Here I must quote Mr. Dawson's own words taken from an article on his religious development contributed to the *Catholic Times* (May 21, 1926):

> It was by the study of St. Paul and St. John that I first came to understand the fundamental unity of Catholic theology and the Catholic life. I realized that the Incarnation, the sacraments, the external order of the Church and the internal working of sanctifying grace, were all parts of one organic unity, a living tree whose roots are in the Divine nature and whose fruit is the perfection of the saints. . . . This fundamental doctrine of sanctifying grace, as revealed in the New Testament and explained by Saint Augustine and Saint Thomas in all its connotations, removed all my difficulties and uncertainties and carried complete conviction to my mind.

Mr. Dawson was received into the Church at St. Aloysius's, Oxford, on January 6, 1914. On August 9, 1916, he married Miss Valery Mills, whose devoted help and sympathetic understanding have provided him with the conditions most favorable to his work. There are three children: two daughters and a son.

Mr. Dawson has lived apart from active life—a detached observer and student. Under these circumstances many, perhaps most, men would have become dilettantes or pedants—"remote and ineffectual" academics. Mr. Dawson's "keen force of intellect"—*vivida vis animi*—has developed an intense and concentrated inner life which in a more outwardly active career might have been dissipated in superficial activities. Disengaged from the currents of a particular section of the stream of human history, the immediate here and now which is the necessary environment of the life of action, he has surveyed at leisure its entire course. Wide and delicate sympathies supported by an amazing sweep of erudition have placed him in vital contact with all the forces individual and social which have shaped the history and culture of mankind. But his vision is as deep as it is wide. He sees the course of human history in the light of eternity, *sub specie aeternitatis*. While allowing their due weight to the material forces—physical environment, economic organization, etc.—which have shaped human society and conditioned human thought, he finds the mainspring of both in the profound life of the spirit, in a religious faith. Because our culture is no longer based on religion, has no longer the firm foundation of a common view of the world and man in relation to God and as embodying divine and eternal values, he sees it inwardly disintegrated, a prey to pseudo-religions which like Bolshevism deify humanity and society as themselves absolute values.

Mr. H. G. Wells in his powerful and popular "History of Mankind" has depicted human history from a purely secular standpoint, explaining religion away as the illusory product of non-religious forces. Mr. Dawson recalls us to a more adequate vision. In his "Age of the Gods" and his "Making of Europe," in which with a master hand he utilizes the vast material accumulated by modern archaeological and historical investigation, he has written two chapters of a world history as comprehensive and better documented than Mr. Wells's, in which the facts are presented in the only adequate perspective. Without apologetic forcing, the facts as he sets them out interpret themselves in a religious sense. Every step of human progress is shown to be directly or indirectly the result of a religious attitude to life, every culture a religion-culture. In the service of the Mother Goddess man invented agriculture, in the name of Christ the Church built up the civilization of Western Europe from the ruins left by the fall of Rome.

In a shorter work, "Progress and Religion," Mr. Dawson states the outline—lays the foundations—of a valid historical sociology. With an unerring eye for the significant, he has utilized a voluminous reading which covers the entire course of history and embraces the most varied fields of scholarship—archaeology, anthropology, history in the strict sense, sociology, literature, art, comparative religion, metaphysics and theology—to display human progress as bound up inextricably with religion. Even the secularized progress of mod-

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ern Europe is shown to be the child of Christianity, however loudly it may disown its parentage, and doomed, unless it returns to religious faith, to wither at its roots, as the secularized civilization of Rome withered. Mr. Dawson has drawn a brilliant picture of that decay in his essay on "Saint Augustine and His Age" in "Enquiries."

This brings us to Mr. Dawson's fourth and latest work, "Enquiries into Religion and Culture," a collection of essays already published individually in periodicals or elsewhere. There is a wide range of subjects but, as Mr. Dawson points out in his Preface, an inner unity—the intrinsic relation of social organization to religion—and the book reënforces from a variety of different angles the thesis of "Progress and Religion." There is an essay which divides history into a series of recurrent culture cycles, each of which, as it perishes, fertilizes new material to produce such a synthesis as the Christian mediaeval culture, daughter of a wedlock between Greco-Roman culture and the culture of the barbarian invaders. Written, as Mr. Dawson notes, without knowledge of Spengler's work, it is a counterpart and counterblast to "The Decline of the West," in which the same theme—the order of culture cycles—is treated with more accurate adjustment to the historical facts and on the foundation not of a philosophic scepticism, for which each culture is the autonomous and self-sufficient expression of a purely subjective social spirit, but as one among a chain of cultures which successively express with increasing fullness an objective body of truth, and above all, a religion whose object is directly or indirectly an objectively real and world-transcending Godhead. Even an essay on "Islamic Mysticism," at first sight more remote from the main thesis, displays the religious soul of the later Islamic culture in comparison and partial contrast with Christian mysticism. And the defects of Sufi mysticism—a quietist pantheism for which all differentiations of created value, even of creeds, are abolished—is shown to be vitally connected with the static character of Islamic culture, its inability to face modern conditions without collapse. The essay on China shows us the hopeless and helpless condition of a great nation whose spiritual roots, a religion-culture dating over millenia, have been violently torn up; the "Study of Bolshevism," the essential self-contradiction of a pseudo-religion which ascribes absolute value to what is relative—godhead to social humanity.

Mr. Dawson's work therefore is essentially a host of variations upon one fundamental theme. Religion—real region—the worship of a transcendent and absolute God, which alone can vitalize any society and make it part of a living culture, and moreover the most perfect religion, the worship of God in His supreme Self-revelation in Christ and Christ's social extension the Catholic Church, is the soul which alone can restore life, with the unity of direction and the intrinsic order it implies to our Western civilization, at present disintegrated from within and its outer framework, the corpse molded by the action of that soul in the past, liable to collapse from the attacks of the enemies which threaten it from without.

This thesis is enforced by a host of illustrations drawn from every period of human history, from the stone age to the present day, and from all parts of the globe. And every illustration is at the same time a faithful picture of that portion of the historical and social field with which it deals—a picture in which the inner form of the society in question is revealed by the vivid master strokes of a literary artist. From a host of material, detail accumulated by an omnivorous reading and a marvelous memory, the facts are selected which reveal in a flash the essential nature of the object—a judgment or principle of wide scope and profound depth manifested, it may be, in a single illuminating detail. It is an entire fabric of historical sociology which Mr. Dawson is building up, not in a continuous treatise logically constructed and set out, but by turning the flashlight of his trained and piercing vision on a host of different points in the history of social mankind to display everywhere religion as the essential social form, constructing a society whose value is conditioned by the degree of its own purity and truth. No prospect is more important for us than this, and no man better adapted than Mr. Dawson to set it before our eyes. The social salvation of Western man is at stake today and he shows us its indispensable principles. There are all too many brilliant charlatans—blind leaders of the blind. Let us rather turn to Mr. Dawson, who has eyes to see.

Storm

All other storms were playthings to this storm.
It was as if God broke the molds of form
And the huge fragments, hurtling, whizzed like wires.
Confusions stalked across the blotted shires.
Now they joined hands. They doubled the wild din.
They fought once more. Earth's crust seemed fallen in.
What could withstand such turmoil? Rocks only could
By twining their stone roots. Nothing else stood.
Trees groaned like mandrakes. Sap in sweaty beads
Stared from their barks. Boughs broke. But the crude weeds,
Hemlock and ragwort, plantain, parsley and dock,
Held out more grimly against the furious shock
Than those gnarled trees that like a leathern tether
Knit the broad acres of this land together.

LOUIS GOLDING.

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AMONG THE MILK FARMERS

By ROBERT WHITCOMB

AT NEWPORT, north of Herkimer on the Albany-Buffalo road, we telephone the Piseck farm. Party-line telephone with a crank.

"Mr. Piseck?"

"Yes, this is Andrew Piseck; the boys will all be here at twelve noon Standard time; come on up."

We go off the concrete and onto the country macadam, up a hill. On all sides are the Herkimer County hills, long, low, intimate, well-broken and tamed, with only occasional woodlots. A dry season; the trees are turning olive-color the first week of August; the corn is dwarfed; the cows would starve on this pasturage. The farms look prosperous; big barns and silos, well-painted houses, good fence.

The Piseck farm, second turn to the right. It is off the road in full sight, plain and unadorned. A herd of Holsteins feeds on a slope. A car stops on the way out of the yard.

"Can Mr. Piseck tell us something about the milk farmers?"

"Can he? If he can't nobody can; you are in the right place, Mister."

We come up to the back door and are met by a short, squat, powerful man in overalls.

"Mr. Piseck?"

"Yes, I am Stanley Piseck."

He leans forward to catch our questions; he is a little deaf. A big dog curls nearby; chickens roam and peck.

"Come inside here."

Several men are eating at a twelve-foot table in the kitchen; we pass through to the curtainless parlor and sit down at a polished dining-room table. On the table are two sheets of paper, painfully scrawled in pen and ink between blue lines: one is addressed to Senator Royal S. Copeland, the other to President Roosevelt.

Stanley Piseck catches our questions quickly and answers them sweepingly, overpowering us. He shows us with paper and pencil, grasping the pencil as though it is a pitchfork. In Wisconsin the farmers' coöperatives pay $2.76 a hundred pounds on milk testing 3.5 butter-fat, selling at $.10 a quart, with smaller markets; in that golden state the farmers' cost of production is lower than in New York; and due to racketeering, graft and watered stock the New York milk machine returns less proportionally on its investment. Borden's or the Dairymen's League or Sheffield's pays New York farmers at the present time just about enough to starve their cows. This company got so-much from the Reconstruction Finance Corporation, and pays that-much in dividends. Where is the farmers' new deal?

Is this man a farmer, a strike leader, or a statistician? He is all three. The telephone rings the Piseck party number, and Felix, Stanley's brother, slimmer, with blacksmith arms, enters. Two farmers come with him and silently take seats. A sedan drives into the yard and around to the back door: directors of a small independent milk company.

"Mr. Piseck? Can we find a place to talk?"

"Well, it is kind of crowded here; come and sit in the car."

Stanley, in overalls, thick arms and elbows in back of his head, talks to men in linen knickerbockers: he leans toward them to catch their words. All right, the farmers are willing to supply the fluid market and keep the surplus "to home," but the milk companies want the surplus because they can get it cheap and make it into cheese or ice cream.

The Pisecks are Polish-American, born in Illinois. They worked on the farm and studied agriculture and coöperative farming at the state university. Then they moved here. The Piseck boys are all unmarried; their mother and sister run the farmhouse. Just now, during the milk strike, the women use the family washing machine to make butter from the milk that did not go to market. They want the strike to end because they need the washing machine to wash clothes. Over near the orchard it looks as though it had snowed bedsheets.

At the polished table sits Mr. Lewandrowsky, in blue denim; he might be a farm hand, but he owns the farm across the road, for all the good it does him. He has untrimmed, uncurled mustachios; above them his blue eyes snap.

"You come from The City? My sister is visiting us from there; she lives on 57th Street West. Yes, the farmer is the goat. I have eight people working on my farm; last month my milk check was $150; my expenses were $200; my farm cost me $30,000. This year we have to draw water for the cows; thirty cows drink a lot of water. Farm Hands? No, I don't have any; we are all relatives; there are farm hands around here, but they all work for something to eat and a place to sleep, nothing else.

"There is a man lives in that house across the valley, he owed money to the silo company and they got a court judgment. The payments for the silo are taken out of his milk check by the milk company. This year he can't pay for milk-ration feed for his cows, like all of us, and the dry season takes all the ensilage. His milk check is zero.

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His brother had to give him bread to eat. I took him down to the Overseer of the Poor in town, but he couldn't do anything, he said, because the man owned a farm.

"The men who haul our milk down to the milk station make more money than the farmers. Even a clerk getting $20 a week is better off than a farmer. The farmer works for less than nothing. We are desperate."

"Can we get something to eat?"

Food is laid out. These farm women love space in their homes, space for barrels of flour, domestic machinery, pantries, gallon pitchers. We are served with milk, cream, pale yellow butter, pot cheese, fried eggs and home-baked bread.

From a superintendent of a Dairymen's League milk plant we hear of a meeting at Norwich. The superintendent is dressed in white overalls. He thinks if prices go up it will encourage more cows, and they have enough of them, anyway—a vicious cycle.

"The plant opened up this morning, and practically all the men out on strike brought their milk back. Deputy sheriffs still sleep at the plant overnight to protect it from violence. Yes, the depression cut down the amount of milk used, and the farmers are therefore unreasonable to want higher prices, although I don't blame them. The farmers are paid a pooled price, regulated in New York by the milk machine, an average between the high price for fluid or bottled milk, and the surplus. Even a farmer is an employee of Wall Street."

Norwich is in Chenango County, also a county with beautiful pastoral hills. It is here that much of the waylaying of milk trucks was done, off the main road, at country bridges, etc., and milk baths given to farmers who wouldn't strike. Norwich is a town of 10,000, the Norwich Medical plant, a hammer factory, a railroad yard, some other mills. Some Negroes in the uniform of the Citizens' Conservation Camps make merry aboard a truck. The courthouse is nicely landscaped; it is the county seat. The farmers have the courthouse for their meeting.

At eight o'clock the courtroom is full; the farmers are dressed up; their large worn hands look peculiar coming out of pressed sleeves; it is wrong for those hands to be idle. Women come too. In stamps Richard J. Clemens, organizer of the Rutland Association for farmers, a beneficiary organization. He is greeted with handclaps. Because there is no chairman, he steps to the judge's bench and swings the gavel, then grins.

"After the strife, the calm," he says, smugly.

Clemens is no Piseck; he is a city man, with no basic interest in the farmers or a farmers' movement outside of his own. He gesticulates melodramatically. He has been to Albany, and an audience with the Milk Control Board has been denied. For this he is applauded and he swells with pride. He tells about the fine gold spittoons they have in Albany, and he uses one behind the judge's bench. The farmers adore him, some of them.

Now Mr. Clemens asks individual farmers to speak; high-handedly he controls the meeting; volubly he questions the inarticulate men of work. The same story. The Milk Control Board, established in April by the passage of the Pitcher Bill, made a mountain heave and brought forth a mouse. Cornell University tells the farmer what he well knows: it costs more to produce his milk than he is paid for it. The New York milk machine is making profit, even paying dividends, and the farmer is helping them to do it by being forced to submit. Mr. Clemens's clowning made it all seem gay and in the nature of things, and the meeting let him talk. Below the surface, the farmer will seize any stray bit of leadership that is offered; the trouble is that, as an individual, he is made independent and ornery by his "ownership" of the land.

Mr. Mills of Delaware County: "Yes, the boys around our way was energetic and mighty muscular; it's too bad the state troopers come down, they are all nice boys holding down jobs; it's too bad, but you can't avoid accidents in situations concerning so many people. Not with all the propaganda the milk companies have been putting out."

"No," says Mr. Clemens, "force is wrong, and Richard J. Clemens can never be said to favor it. Nobody in the world can tell a farmer he can't keep his milk to home, but nobody can give him the right to dump his neighbor's milk."

The courthouse is wreathed in smiles.

The farm of Walter Blair is on top of the nearest thing to a mountain in Chenango County, outside of Sherburne. In Sherburne are two milk plants, the Dairymen's League, controlled by Borden's, and Sheffield's plant. Also plant No. 5 of the Utica Knitting Company.

It is Sunday, and the New York *Times*, printed so far away, reports that the strike leaders have proclaimed a truce with the agreement of the Governor. A thunderstorm is booming as we approach the lonely house. To the back door, as usual. A white-haired woman asks our business.

"Mr. Blair is sleeping; he has had a hard week. Just got back from Albany last night. I won't wake him, but come to the front porch and set. Reporters are an awful bother; and they always twist things."

The rain drives down; through it rattles a dilapidated car containing two farmers. They ask for

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Mr. Blair; this time Mr. Blair is awakened; this is business. The rain forces us inside.

He walks down the stairs in a clean striped shirt open at the neck, a man over forty, soft-spoken, wearing glasses.

"Hello, boys."

"We are from New York, writing about the farmers."

"Do you write for a radical paper?"

He tells how the truce was called.

"The Governor is tired and troubled, his hands are tied. The Milk Control Board won't arbitrate until the strike is called off. We did the next best thing. The milk has started moving, and there will be no more trouble among us peaceable farmers unless the Milk Control Board is unreasonable. Of course we know that our enemy has been the milk companies, but the board is an agency of the state.

"How did this get started? Well in 1919 we had what is now called the old Dairymen's League. We struck then, and we won, under G. W. Slocum. But then Borden's and Sheffield's slowly began to buy up our local cheese factories; they handle the surplus milk when we keep it to home; cheese factories are the farmer's best insurance. The Dairymen's League was wrested out of our hands, delegates were bought and paid for at the Jersey City convention. Now we receive a monthly check and the prices are made in New York for the products we produce here. We are like any employee of a corporation, except that also we have our life savings invested in land, buildings, machinery and cattle—our farms.

"This year the drought came; we are being paid for our milk at a price we cannot exist on—$.02 a quart or less; this winter I don't know what will happen; the Milk Board must act.

"Yes, they tried to reject my milk this morning because I had a hand in the strike; but this won't keep up, the Governor says he will look after such cases. Yes, they arrested me for disorderly conduct. I came on this farmer when I was going over to Fultonville. I shook hands with him, and persuaded him to take his milk back home; I told him I couldn't stop the boys from dumping it if I wanted. But he was a member of the Dairymen's League, and he said he had to keep his contract. I said I would buy that load of milk, and he would have the milk and the money too, but he said 'No.' So the boys dumped his milk. In court he told a straight story, said there were no threats of any kind. When they asked him why he made a complaint, he said it wasn't him that made it. I know they were trying to shut me up, but they will never do that."

Every morning now, about daybreak, the milk is hauled to the milk plants, the cans emptied, processed and returned to the trucks. The milk goes through icy pipes and whatnot; every time milk is handled there is waste. Thermos trucks, thermos freight cars, no longer in danger of being punctured with bullet holes. Cheese, butter, milk powder, evaporated, condensed; pasteurization, and milk for babies.

The milk farmer must bring his milk to the company, and take the company's word for the butterfat test, and for the proportion used for fluid and the surplus left over; at the end of the month he must take the pooled price. For he is disorganized, and attempts to organize him after the betrayal of the old Dairymen's League have failed. Last year such an attempt had the backing of Cornell experts, the State Grange and Governor Roosevelt.

At Albany, on the steps of the capitol, we join the mass of farmers listening to speakers.

Stanley and Felix Piseck, of Herkimer County, in shoes that pinch and collars white against their red necks: "We thank you men for your coöperation in this campaign; we mean business, by which I mean we must coöperate and join hands to give fine homes, fine farms, to all our people. This afternoon we will meet with the Milk Control Board and present figures that cannot be disproved. The dissipation of the honest labor of our men, women and children cannot go on."

Walter Blair of Chenango. Albert Woodhead of Rochester, Richard Clemens of the Rutland Association, absent. Jacob Friers, Allen Nelson, a speaker on behalf of the consumers in the cities. Governor Lehman will not speak.

In the Executive Chamber we interview an attaché: "No, I cannot tell you, I cannot answer what will happen if somebody asks somebody else something. The Milk Board is in charge."

For a Child Born at Nightfall

On a naked earth, beneath the stormy light
Where wide day shreds to its appointed end,
Behold the first oncoming of the night,
The mountains deepen, and the sheep descend.

The ram's bell falls upon the frosted wind;
Swaying and murmurous, the dim flock follows:
There was a summer they have left behind,
Where moonlight poured into the slumberous hollows . . . .

Behold them, who have fed on meadow-sweet,
Drifting downward to the autumnal fold:
They cry, who never knew the heart's defeat,
Huddled in silver wool against the cold.

Grieving, but not for summer's lovely dead,
Across the brittle grass they move like foam;
The revelation of the dusk is fled:
Behold the dark, tremendous earth, your home!

FRANCES FROST.

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THE NEW POLITICS

By ELMER MURPHY

"SOCIAL," once linked by the somewhat scornful politician with dining, afternoon teas and Rotary Club gatherings, has at last found its way into the glossary of politics. "Social effects," "social obligations," "social implications," "social benefits," are sprinkled profusely in congressional oratory and the lay discussion of public affairs—phraseological flowers strewn on the grave of "rugged individualism."

Evidently we have, as a nation, turned a corner and are headed in a new direction. Persons are merged in the background of people. Our solicitude for the one, the individual, is giving way to concern over the many. Singularity is yielding to collectivism, and the citizen is being made to bow to the state. Our ideals might remain the same but we have certainly set out on a new way of achieving them. Practices that have prevailed since the founding of the republic have been abandoned and we have set out on the broad deep of experiment—social reconstruction—with no very clear idea of where we are going but with the solacing conviction that we have left an unregretted past behind.

Our statesmanship has ceased to be microscopic, centering its scrutiny upon the cellular unit of the social structure, and has become telescopic, contemplating the problems before it in broad vistas. But they are the same old problems. After many years of trying to help the farmer, we are now trying to resuscitate agriculture. After attempting, not with very much success, to curb the industrial buccaneer and save the independent manufacturer from annihilation by the "trust," we are formulating a moral code for industry as a whole. We purpose, henceforth, to keep clear of the disasters to which bad bankers led us by reforming banking. The difficulties which confront the railroads are to be met by a "coördinator" who is to regenerate railroad transportation. In other words, we are passing from the retail to the wholesale stage of public administration.

All of these activities are labeled "social" by the forward-looking politician and the exuberant reformers. "Social values," "social balance," "social ideals," are their guideposts. The word has become a voluminous mantle to cloak all that they are trying to accomplish. Economics and politics are wrapped in its ample folds. We are almost persuaded that we sow and reap not to fill our stomachs but to raise social values, and that our railroads are not operated to haul freight but to elevate social standards.

Attention is centered upon the forest and not upon trees. For a long time we had practised the philosophy that if we stimulated the growth of sturdy trees, we would have a sturdy forest, but the sequence did not work out. Some trees grew to prodigious proportions but their spreading branches swallowed up an undue measure of sunshine and stunted the growth of smaller trees within their shadow. Anti-trust laws were enacted to limit their growth. We sought in various ways, by regulation and by outlawing conspiracies in restraint of trade, to lop off the overhanging boughs and allow the lesser growth to sink its roots in the soil of open competition. This method did not work very well. And when the drought of depression engulfed us, the large trees, represented by billion dollar corporations and gigantic industrial plants, managed to keep alive, but many of the smaller ones languished and died.

The process has now been reversed. We have decided to improve the forests, hoping that the trees, under conditions we have attempted to create by legislation, will take root and flourish in the soil prepared for them. In the perspective of agricultural readjustment good farmers, bad farmers and indifferent farmers are all of the same stature. In dealing with transportation we place all railroads on a common footing, whether they are built to meet actual traffic needs or to meet the exigencies of stock exploitation and never should have been built at all. By a reorganized banking system we hope to make bankers uniformly trustworthy and competent. We have given up trying to reform industrialists and are now trying to reform industry.

Ultra-conservatives, in and out of Congress, Democrats as well as Republicans, are dismayed at the prospect. They cling to the time-worn tradition that the advancement of a people begins with the advancement of the individual, that good agriculture is to be brought about by good farmers, that sound banking hinges upon competent bankers, that constructive industry begins with broad-visioned industrialists and workmen and that the strength of a state depends wholly upon the hardihood of its citizens. In what is now being done they see the gathering shadows of "socialism," in which the individual is arbitrarily reduced to the level of a statistical abstraction and shorn of all those personal characteristics which are the fountain-head of the initiative, ambition and aspiration which make for common progress, however irregular it might be.

The ultra-liberal, on the other hand, aims at mass effects and ignores details. Senator Thomas, Senator Norris and others of the Progressive bloc are concerned very much about the forest and very

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little about the trees. For the sake of uniformity some of this group would, apparently, cut down the largest and most vigorous of them because they are out of proportion with the general forest pattern. In their scheme of society the man of wealth and the huge corporation are abnormalities. They have not attained this disparity by exceptionally sturdy growth, but by stunting the growth of others blanketed by their shade. The industrial buccaneer, the exploiter and the freebooter are very much in their mind's eye not because they are evil in themselves but because they are out of step. Even the most righteous might be highly undesirable because by their diligence and success they disturb the social tempo. Directors of banks and large corporations are as a class suspect and given to treason against the group, the social unit which occurs frequently in the vocabulary of Professor Tugwell and the numerous other exponents of the new deal.

Undoubtedly, there is a middle course between these two extremes which the administration seems to be attempting to follow. It is not very clearly charted. President Roosevelt has been given authority to change the course to avoid obstacles as they arise. We are feeling our way, but the goal at which we aim is fairly discernible.

We seem to have come rather abruptly to the conclusion that the conditions in which we live have changed and that we must change our agriculture, our finance, our industry and our politics with them. Whether we like it or not, this is a gregarious age. Each of us is not merely an individual, but one of a group into which circumstance has compressed us. There is no longer an empty continent over which we can spread to preserve our isolation. We cannot escape the intricacies of a social existence and get away from disturbing neighbors by observing Horace Greeley's injunction, "Go West." We are bound together by innumerable economic ties and are, to a less degree, masters of our own destinies than our pioneering forefathers. What we do will affect many others and what they do will affect us. Some might be more important cogs in the machine than others, but they are cogs none the less, and when the machine slows down, as it has during the past four years, they slow down with it. The trees are growing so closely together that the problems confronting us are not only those of arboriculture but of forestry as well.

It is the latter with which the administration is now dealing and which is the distinctive characteristic of the new deal. It is attempting to bring about conditions which will enable trees—each of the groups in our national makeup—to lift their branches to the sun and sink their roots deeply into the soil of national resources. In the case of the Tennessee Basin project it is contemplating seeding a new region where there will be greater uniformity of growth. The food processer and consumer are to give a little more room to the wheat and cotton grower. The manufacturer is to limit his expansion to enable the wage earner to make his way to the light and not remain forever hapless underbrush. The investor or lender is to demand less of the borrower. The creditor, if the course is to be followed through to its logical end, will, through inflation, be compelled to lighten the burden of the debtor—all for the purpose of establishing the social balance, of which, at the moment, we seem to be so desperately in need.

Something of this sort was probably inevitable and is a logical development of the changing environment in which we live. Civil law, after all, is nothing more than an expression of the relation of the individual to his environment. We are bound to have more of it as these relationships multiply and we are drawn more closely together. A farmer may keep cows in the country, but it is not desirable in the city, not because it is a reprehensible social practice but because it inflicts discomfort upon neighboring individuals.

The new deal, as far as its sponsor, President Roosevelt, has explained, does not, apparently, go beyond this—the ordering of human relationships so far as it may be necessary to prevent the individual from transgressing upon the rights of neighbors, to enable big trees and little trees to grow side by side. But some of the more enthusiastic advocates of the new deal seem to think that the most effective way of stimulating forest growth is to cut down all the big trees in order to allow more space to the little trees. They are swept off their feet by the social urge. If they had their way, economics would be pinioned in a political straitjacket and made to serve purely social ends.

Unhappily, economics does not move in the social orbit. Business, in spite of the effort to invest it with social responsibilities, remains business and is inexorably held to the profit and loss groove. From the social viewpoint, it would be very desirable to have it pay wages that would insure pleasant living and a modicum of leisure and luxuries and soften the asperities of illness and old age. From the economic viewpoint, it cannot pay more than it can earn. No industry can operate on a deficit. All the resources of government cannot prevent its ultimate collapse. The heavy weight of depression is not accounted for by the fact that some are getting more wealth than others and many nothing at all, but by the fact that as a nation our production of wealth has fallen off grievously. In the four dismal years since 1929 the national income slumped from approximately $85,000,000,000 to $35,000,000,000.

The professorial advocates of the new dispensation are now apparently coming to the conclusion that the main task ahead is not the redistribution of what wealth we have but the production of

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more wealth, not to cut down what trees we have but to grow other trees. The wheels of industry must be started going. That is the motive back of the Industrial Recovery Act, the Agricultural Adjustment Act and other measures. The increase in wages and reëmployment are not the end but the means of attaining it. They are expected to revive consumption which, in turn, is expected to stimulate production and reverse the vicious spiral which leads to depression. President Roosevelt and General Johnson are probably quite as aware as anyone else that industry cannot pay out more than it takes in. We can, if we choose, legislate out of existence an industry or type of industry, if we decide that its social disadvantages outweigh its social benefits, but we cannot compel it to serve social ends merely by laying upon it a moral obligation, as many people seem to think. If it does not make a profit out of which to pay the wage earner and investor, it is doomed to oblivion. The laws of business are not moral laws. Neither can economics be molded to political or social purposes.

It so happens that social aims and economic aims lie in the same direction. A bankrupt consumer is a drawback to business as well as to society. A uniform and stable prosperity is the economic happy hunting ground. Poverty or unproductiveness is an economic as well as a social disability. Who is to produce if there is none to buy? By the same token, what industry is to pay wages, if it continues to sell its goods at a loss?

Economic aims and social aims are still inextricably mixed in Washington, but the skies are clearing and it is not impossible, or even improbable, that when we have settled down to the task of administering the sweeping laws that have been enacted, it will be found that the economic good and the social good are the same. But, at the moment, it is apparent that one cannot be substituted for the other.

To a Politician

You are a little glib with verities.
You made these wise word-patterns long ago
And are content to leave them always so.
You say these solemn things with so much ease;
Your gestures are so well designed to please,
And constant iteration makes you know
Just when to let your pleading voice drop low
Or rise to calculated ecstasies.

We need but good plain-dealing now, my friend;
Have done with all your petty, postured art.
This bombast is not worth the breath you spend;
Now while our eager, waiting ears attend,
Make of this wretched, trivial farce an end,
And speak an honest moment from your heart.

FRANCES HALL.

A COLLEGE POETRY SOCIETY

By THEODORE MAYNARD

MR. FREDERIC THOMPSON has already explained in these columns something of the purpose of the Catholic Poetry Society of America. My intention is merely to offer a few suggestions as to how a college group may be organized.

I can do this best, perhaps, by telling a little of what we have done at Georgetown University, not that we have achieved wonders, but in the belief that the Gerard Manley Hopkins Society may offer a hint or two that other groups may be able to improve upon.

We have been fortunate in many ways. First, in having the Jesuit scholastic, Mr. Thomas Sulkie, to look after the details of organization. Next, in the presence at Georgetown this year of Father Francis Burke, who gave at our inaugural meeting a lecture of the utmost brilliance and profundity presenting an aesthetic system mainly based upon Saint Augustine and Claudel. Further, we happen to have a group of unusually gifted students. And, to crown our luck, we had a senior named John Milton as our president.

At the outset we made it clear that members could join only upon invitation: the group was to be kept strictly select. Even so, there are about forty members. Another point insisted upon was that the society was to have nothing of the tone of a sodality. Our interest is primarily in poetry, and only secondarily in Catholic poetry. We have no interest at all in facile pious versifying. And a few of our members, including at least one of the officers, are non-Catholics.

Professors of the university may be members, but no professor is eligible for office, though the suggestion was offered that two of them—one a religious, and the other a layman—should be elected as advisors. Further, the president was elected from the seniors, the vice-president from among the juniors, and the secretary from among the sophomores: the idea being to have a "royal succession" available for future development.

We have two meetings a month. For one of them we have a well-known poet read to us, or offer his views about poetry; at the other the members read and criticize one another's poems, or present papers. A prize for the best poem is offered by the college *Journal*.

Geographically we are a little at a disadvantage, for Washington is not a literary center. Even so, nobody can complain of the quality of the fare that has been offered. Benjamin Musser, Caroline Giltinan, Muna Lee, Leonora Speyer, Lawrence Lee and Charles Edward Russell have read or lectured to us; and others as distinguished are coming.

But someone may ask, "How do you finance all this?" The answer is that it costs practically nothing. While poets have no aversion to collecting a fee, many of them are willing to read, when the date of the engagement can be made to coincide with their convenience, for no other reward except that of having an appreciative audience.

Though we already have three university publica-

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tions—exclusive of the *Georgetown Law Journal*—we put to the proof our belief that there was ample talent and energy for the manning of a little magazine devoted exclusively to poetry. Through the generosity of the rector of the university, Father Coleman Nevils, *Measure* is now published semi-annually, the first poetry magazine, I believe, to be entirely written by the members of a small college society. Its reception has been highly encouraging.

After a teaching experience of twelve years in several different American Catholic colleges, I do not think I have many illusions. I am well aware that a large number of students regard English literature (particularly poetry) as a thing they need not take seriously; that some of them seem to be impervious to literature. But, on the other hand, I have found that a certain percentage even of these can be awakened to it, and that there is in almost every college a group who have definite literary gifts. Genius, of course, is another matter; but I think I have seen flashes of genius. The disheartening thing is that there are so few outlets for the Catholic who wants to write, so few opportunities for developing a Catholic tradition in letters. The formation of college branches of the Catholic Poetry Society would do a great deal in this respect. The non-Catholic colleges have already an affiliation of poetry societies and, under the editorship of Eda Lou Walton, a monthly magazine for the publication of college verse.

The Catholic Poetry Society of America should look, and is looking, first of all to the Catholic colleges. Of poetry societies, in the main, I must confess I have some suspicion, for they are too often cliques of freaks; but my experience among college students confirms my conviction that it is no sign of oddity to be interested in poetry. Rather it supports me in my belief that there is something horribly unnatural in not being interested in it. For poetry is the deepest expression of human thought and feeling. In these days of alternating cynicism, sentimentality and despair, when even the hard, bracing (if shallow) spirit of denial is seldom encountered in thought, the Catholic tradition, with its balance, sensitiveness, humor and assurance offers an extraordinary opportunity to the poet.

Now Learn, O Cynic

Now learn, O cynic, neither is the face
Of love grown dull nor are your countrymen
Sunk into evilness; the difficult race
Toward glory was not lost forever when
The first men fell, but there is greatness yet
Upon the earth, beyond your eyes to see;
And to mankind you're seriously in debt
For blessings you enjoy unknowingly.

No longer to examine but to regret
All life as odious, futile and devoid
Of truth or charm betrays the senile mind.
Life falls away from people who neglect
To seek its marvels; early are destroyed
The wilful stupid and the wilful blind.

HELENE MULLINS.

LASKI

By MARGUERITE WRZESIEN

LASKI!—but ten years ago a wilderness where even birds refused to build their nests, today one of the most beautiful spots in the vicinity of Warsaw. It is the work of Mother Elizabeth Czacka, the blind Franciscan nun, and of her followers. It would be more true to define it as God's grace working through the intermediary of saintly men and women.

Thanks to Reverend Mother Czacka, this branch of the Franciscan Order in Poland is devoting itself to the care of the blind. The movement began in Warsaw just before the war. Many of the Americans who were in Warsaw at the time, connected with the different relief organizations, will remember the little rooms where Mother Czacka had her headquarters—an apartment where blind women, girls and little children lived in close quarters, under apparently hopeless conditions. There were times when there was food enough only for a day or two, no money on hand, nothing but faith in God's mercy. And God always heard the prayer of His blind children, and they were never really hungry. The Americans did a great deal to help the institution. Indeed, it would be hard to refuse assistance to the gentle blind Mother, with the soft, modulated voice. Her very presence is appealing.

About ten years ago the owner of Laski offered a few acres of this "wilderness" to the Society for the Care of the Blind. Someone else offered a wooden house. Thus it began. One little house after another sprang up as if by magic. There was no capital—just faith, the great power of God's children. Also there were love and poverty and "perfect gladness." The Sisters went begging for food, imitating Saint Francis.

The little community developed rapidly. Americans will be interested to hear that it was money sent to Mother Czacka from America which enabled her to start building the houses for the blind. Today Laski is the home of 150 blind people (110 of whom are children), of 103 nuns, including the novices, and of the necessary personnel of lay workers (such as teachers, office workers, etc.).

Houses for all these—laity and religious—are being built because they must be built, and there is even now great need for more space. Although there is no capital, although the economic crisis prevents people from giving as much as they would want to, behold the big, modern houses that have arisen: St. Theresa's House for blind boys, and St. Stanislas's for blind girls, with all modern conveniences—central heating, baths, sprays, electric light, plenty of sunshine. Of course the buildings are not yet paid for. The finding of the necessary money for this purpose is the perpetual care of the Board of the Society for the Care of the Blind, of which Mother Czacka is the president. Feeding and clothing about 300 people is costly. Someone asked them what they do when food is scarce, or there is actual want of something (as recently, for instance, there was no sugar). The answer

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was very simple: "We pray—and God will surely listen to us." And He does.

Laski is continuing to develop. The newest methods of teaching the blind are applied in the school. The pupils are taught different trades, to enable them to be economically independent. The "wilderness" is yielding remarkable crops, the barren soil has been made fertile—a truly symbolic picture of what Laski is performing in the spiritual life of Poland. More and more people come to Laski for retreats. The institute is surrounded by forests, and it is easy to find the necessary solitude for meditation and prayer in the woods or in the wooden chapel, which even foreigners and non-Catholics have compared to the little stable in Bethlehem. Simplicity personified, of unpolished wood, the pillars made of the trunks of pine trees with the bark left untouched, the tall, slanting double roof and harmonious lines of the centuries-old Polish village churches—such is the chapel of Laski. No description can render the atmosphere of the place. Someone described it as "steeped in the grace of God," and that renders it better than anything I can think of. People who have lost their faith come to Laski and leave there with the peace of God in their hearts.

Laski is now full of lovely flowers, the songs of birds and the merry laughter of little blind children, tended with gentle, loving care. They are indeed happy here, though deprived of light. Happy, because not a single harsh or unkind word is ever said to them. Happy, because from their earliest childhood they are taught the meaning of the Cross, taught to love and bear it, not only with resignation, but with joy. The words of greeting in Laski are, "By the Cross"; the answer is, "To heaven!" One group of little blind children thus greets another, not with mournful faces, but with radiant smiles. The natural result of the atmosphere of Laski is that everyone smiles. Even those who arrive in Laski with cruel tragedy in their hearts, succumb to this pervading atmosphere of gladness.

In the woods, about ten minutes' walk from the chapel, a small piece of land has been fenced around. It looks like a garden, there is such a profusion of flowers. It is the little cemetery—"So tempting and clean, one feels like lying down here oneself!" as one of my friends exclaimed. Exactly! Death, as understood here, is no tragedy—it is the beginning of real life for followers of the Cross.

The spiritual director of Laski, Father Kornilowicz, is building a house of retreat in the woods near the institute. The one which has been begun is temporary—as the need is so great—and there is too little capital for the permanent house to be built a little further off on a hill with a panorama of woodland on all sides—a site Saint Francis himself would surely have recommended for the purpose!

Again the same story: scarcely any money, but an immense need, and therefore God's help assured! Nobody has the slightest doubt that the houses of retreat will be built, both the temporary one and the one on the hill. Nobody has the slightest doubt that Laski will continue developing and radiating the grace of God.

COMMUNICATIONS

LET CATHOLICS TAKE WARNING!

San Francisco, Cal.

TO the Editor: In your issue of June 2, you kindly published a letter of mine in which I deplored the indifference of American Catholics with regard to what is happening in Spain and in Mexico. In treating of the latter country, I mentioned some of those, both lay and clergy, who have raised their voices in protest. As we are very prone to take those of our own household for granted, I omitted to mention one who right here in this city of San Francisco has done immeasurable good to his suffering brethren of Mexico. Will you allow me, through your columns, to pay tribute to him who justly deserves any and all words of praise that may be heaped upon him?

I speak of the Jesuit, Father Denis J. Kavanaugh. He has helped not only with words, but with deeds as well. He is known, loved and revered by Mexican Catholics, particularly in the state of Jalisco; that is, in the Archdiocese of Guadalajara. Our Blessed Lord could very well use him as the type of the Good Samaritan, for instead of passing his bleeding neighbors by, he has bound up their wounds, taken them up, and paid for their sustenance. I speak literally, not figuratively.

Back in 1927, when the physical (I say physical, because at present the persecution is equally bitter, but it is mostly mental) persecution was at its bitterest, it was brought to Father Kavanaugh's attention that a community of Carmelite Sisters was suffering untold troubles. Driven from their convent, they had been forced to seek shelter by twos and threes with different families, and were in constant fear, not so much for themselves, as for the good families that had taken them in, for no crime could be worse in the eyes of the government than that of harboring and protecting a priest or nun. This story of poignant suffering did not fall on deaf ears. Father Kavanaugh immediately took steps to bring the community of twenty-two Sisters to San Francisco. No obstacle was too great for him to overcome. Like the tanks in the war, he literally crushed anything and everything that stood in his path to prevent the accomplishment of his work of mercy, and, thanks be to God, he triumphed. The Sisters came, and with the help of many good people of this city, he was able to get them installed in a humble house near the church of the Jesuit Fathers, from where their saintly and hidden influence has been felt by numberless suffering souls in the city. By almost superhuman efforts, Father Kavanaugh has been able to better their condition each year.

It might reasonably be thought that with such an undertaking accomplished, anyone would be content to rest upon his laurels. Possibly a smaller and less generous heart than Father Kavanaugh would. But when he had succeeded in getting the good Carmelite Sisters settled, and though still faced with the terrible financial problem that must inevitably accompany such an enterprise, he heard of another suffering community from

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the very Catholic city of Guadalajara. Again the Good Samaritan bound up the wounds and all the rest. This time it was an even greater undertaking, for the community numbered not in the twenties but in the forties, but this did not phase him. Nothing mattered, except that they too, spouses of the Lord, had been driven from their convent and had suffered indignities at the hands of the ruffians. After great trials and tribulations, Father Kavanaugh finally succeeded in bringing this other community, Sisters of Perpetual Adoration, and installing them in this city.

Naturally his work is not ended. One might say it has just begun. These years of depression have added to his worries, for it is by no means an easy task to keep two communities fed and clothed. Of course the Sisters work very hard sewing, painting, embroidering, and even cooking, to earn their daily bread, but the pay and alms for such work is inadequate and, therefore, he has worked and works incessantly to help them in their financial difficulties. It is a terribly up-hill fight, but he continues undaunted, sure that other Catholic hearts will come forward to aid him.

In this age of organized and, I might say, heartless philanthropy in which we live, it is refreshing and inspiring to come into contact with such a striking example of real Christian charity.

Needless to say, both communities feel deep and profound gratitude toward their benefactor and protector and also to the people of America and especially San Francisco, where they have found peace after years of continuous frights, insults and indignities. The Carmelites' gratitude found outward expression in a recent public novena to the Little Flower, preached by Father Kavanaugh himself, for the intention of President Roosevelt and the American people and for the success of the NRA.

ADELAIDE E. SMITHERS.

A NOTE ON THE BOURGEOIS WORLD

Philadelphia, Pa.

TO the Editor: Let me congratulate you for having secured for THE COMMONWEAL the illuminating articles by Jacques Maritain which you published in the May 24 and June 2 issues. Like a skillful surgeon he has penetrated to the depths of our "bourgeois world" distress and discovered there a lesion of ideas that threatens the very existence of Christian civilization. What he says of the false theory of "the fecundity of money" recalls a striking remark of a more than ordinarily successful business woman whose amazing achievement in the patient development and extensive cultivation of a natural product of the earth is based upon two generations of preceding labors. She said: "My grandfather's delight was to make certain characteristics in selected types strengthen and reproduce themselves through growth; my father took delight in 'seeing money grow,' as he expressed it."

Just what the false note was in the above remark, which instantly struck me, I did not clearly see until reading the above article. Evidently here was a mistaken idea, a looking upon "money as a living organism" and not seeing in it simply "a feeder enabling a living organism to procure the necessary material" for growth. In this instance the problem of social justice, in handling such an army of workers as so vast a business scheme requires, is by no means simple. The ingenuity required, the ceaseless vigilance, the grave risks in producing and marketing a perishable crop in such a way as to insure profit beyond the expense of upkeep, has to be taken into account by the producer in fixing salaries and dividends. However, the danger of the false assumption regarding money remains.

Nothing is truer than that today, in every department of life, we are facing the consequences of a world that has "finally succeeded in separating itself from Christ." But having laid a finger upon one of the essential causes of present economic distress and grasped something of its implications, the outlook at once brightens. "The end of *a* world is not the end of *the* world. A Christian Renaissance too late for a world derived from Luther. Descartes [I would substitute Cranmer], Rousseau may be early enough for another age of culture." But to insure that new age there must be a return to all the implications of Catholic truth and principle carried into the daily lives of a sufficient number of people so that God may stand "as the principal agent" in earthly affairs and we ourselves may become "coöperators with God in history."

ELIZABETH S. KITE.

"I TOLD YOU SO"

Washington, D. C.

TO the Editor: Three years ago last February I included the following paragraphs in a statement against prohibition before the Committee on the Judiciary of the House of Representatives.

"The Eighteenth Amendment is fundamentally undemocratic because it is a compulsory statute. If the organizations that dictated it had cherished any respect for the principles of democracy, for majority rule, they would have been content with an enabling act. They would have realized that the entrance of the federal government into the field of police regulations was a revolutionary move and therefore should be kept within the narrowest possible limits. They could have simply amended the Constitution so as to enable Congress if it saw fit to enact a prohibition law, and later on if it saw fit to repeal the law. Instead of using this obviously reasonable and democratic method, they put a statute into the Constitution, thus forever making it impossible for Congress alone to repeal prohibition. They showed that they did not trust future Congresses. To the Tories who insisted upon putting the prohibition law into the Constitution we can appropriately address the words of Job: 'Are you then men alone and shall wisdom die with you?' Or, according to the Revised Version: 'No doubt but ye are the people and wisdom shall die with you.' "

Among the many journals that applauded the foregoing statement was not numbered the *Christian Century*. In a long and sorrowing editorial in its issue for August 2, 1933, this able publication refers thus to constitutional prohibition:

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"The dry forces should have been content to secure from the states an amendment granting to congress blanket power over the liquor traffic, to regulate, prohibit or permit it as Congress might determine. If, acting under the grant of such power, Congress had passed a prohibition statute, it would not have been subjected to this particular kind of antagonism which has caused a considerable section of public opinion to resent the withdrawal of a question of this character from the reach of regular democratic processes.

"The stock objection to statutory as contrasted with constitutional prohibition, namely, that it keeps the liquor issue in politics, is nonsense. The liquor issue will be in politics as long as it is an issue. It has been in politics under federal prohibition. It will continue in politics from the day after prohibition is repealed. The only way to take it out of politics is for the wets to surrender, or for the drys to surrender—or for some constructive policy to be devised by which the overwhelming body of reasonable opinion will be satisfied. Taking society as it is, it should seem evident that the policy of depositing prohibition in the crypt of the constitution was bad psychology and bad democracy."

RT. REV. JOHN A. RYAN.

LIBERAL JUDAISM

Cincinnati, Ohio.

TO the Editor: Reverend Everett R. Clinchy of the National Conference of Jews and Christians has graciously forwarded to me a clipping from THE COMMONWEAL of September 1, 1933, in which there is published a review of my book, "Religion and its Social Setting." It is at the esteemed suggestion of Mr. Clinchy that I take the liberty of writing to you about this review, something which I would not have done of my own initiative.

I appreciate the attention which you have bestowed upon my effort. I thank you for the kindness. In the review itself I find almost nothing about which to complain, although I do fail to recognize myself in the imputation that to me religion is "opium for the uneducated mob." I fear that readers of the review might regard those quoted words as my own, which they are not. I am myself a synagogue member, I attend religious services regularly. I preach and officiate at religious gatherings with great frequency.

If, compliant with Mr. Clinchy's counsel, I might be so bold as to comment on the review, I would say that my views are much more in accord with those of the Catholic Church than the reviewer seems to allow. I profoundly admire the genuinely religious aspects of Catholicism; there are certain Catholic values that I would like to see imported into Judaism. There have been moments in my life when I have fantasied myself a Catholic.

I also doubt whether my book is as representative of my Jewish group as the reviewer believes. We Jews are extremely individualistic. A member of such a compact organization as the Catholic Church can hardly grasp the extent of our personal independence. While some Jews would regard me as intolerably radical, others would disdain me as a moss-backed conservative. The Hebrew Union College where I teach takes no official cognizance of my book whatsoever. In the philosophic essay after which the book is named, I am, among the Jews, virtually a *vox clamantis in deserto*.

No, I do not regard religion as "opium for the uneducated mob." Religion is each individual's expression of allegiance to the very best of which he is capable and that is something which should command our deepest reverence.

ABRAHAM CRONBACH.

ECONOMICS AND ETHICS

Pittsburgh, Pa.

TO the Editor: On page 523 of THE COMMONWEAL for October 6 there is an article by Dr. John A. Ryan, in which I read the following:

"As Pope Leo XIII put it, we may lay it down as a general and perpetual law that Workmen's Associations should be so organized and governed as to furnish the best and most suitable means for attaining what is aimed at; that is to say, for helping each individual member to better his condition to the utmost in body, mind and property."

Immediately after this quotation from Pope Leo, Dr. Ryan says: "In these United States, experience has abundantly proved that the only kind of associations complying with the rule laid down by Pope Leo are the regular national unions, organized and maintained by the workers themselves, independently of any assistance, benevolent or non-benevolent, provided by their employers."

These false conclusions and uwarranted assumptions of Dr. Ryan are of a type quite usual with him and with many other Catholic economists and sociologists. They try to be more Catholic than the Pope. Dr. Ryan is here guilty of a flagrant flaw against logic; his conclusion is wider than his premises, and his whole argument falls because it is a non-sequitur. If Pope Leo wanted the men of America to join the regular national unions, the Pope would have said so. Dr. Ryan is not entitled to speak for Pope Leo, or to read into the Pope's words implications that the great Pontiff did not put there.

Secondly: It is not true that experience proves that the only kind of associations complying with the rule of Pope Leo are the regular national unions. Why force men into so-called regular national unions when the men themselves refuse to obey their regular national union leaders? We have in the Pittsburgh district at this very moment wildcat strikes in the coal fields and at steel and coke plants, not called by the regular national union leaders, but in spite of their vehement and continued protests. The regular union leaders have absolutely no control over the men in their own unions. Regular national unions are proving that they can get out of control over night; why then attempt to force men into them? Pope Leo was wiser than Dr. Ryan; he permitted conditions to determine the type of union workmen should join, and Dr. Ryan should follow more closely the great Pope he quotes so often.

M. H. SWEENEY.

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THE PLAY

By RICHARD DANA SKINNER

Ah, Wilderness!

EUGENE O'NEILL is probably the most highly sensitized poet writing in the English language today. His plays are the intimate and ill-concealed expression—one might almost say personification—of his conscious and semi-conscious mental problems. He does not label his characters, after the fashion of the old morality plays, as "my better self," "my rebellious self," "my feminine self," "my masculine self" or as "my pride" and "my humility." In fact he is probably only dimly aware, if at all, that his characters do represent or personify such sides of his inner tumult of warring selves. It is of the very fiber of the true poet to "create" characters without any clear realization of the fact that his creations are the warming into life of many of his potential and often hidden qualities. Creative writing is by necessity a gradual process of self-revelation, the measure of its interest for us being the richness and variety of the character revealed.

O'Neill has revealed unsparingly in the past the tumult in his soul. He has held back nothing. He has revealed the shyness which sought to protect itself by the use of masks, the inner fear of contact with the world and all that it led to as dramatized in "Strange Interlude," and frantic and fatal search for a new source of power in "Dynamo," and the final recognition in "Mourning Becomes Electra" that peace could be found only by turning back into himself for a time. In the last act of that play, the daughter of the house of Mannon shuts herself up in the silent home of her ancestors, a gesture not unlike the soul seeking in retreat that undisturbed examination of self which alone can bring order out of chaos and tumult. O'Neill's latest play, strange as it may seem to the casual theatre-goer, is the logical sequence to the "Electra" play.

"Ah, Wilderness!" for all its apparent objective simplicity, is, in fact, a turning back to the first point of self-examination in the memories of adolescence. On the surface, it is a simple play of youth and first love, something which might almost have been written by Booth Tarkington. It has been called a nostalgic play, and a biographical play, as if O'Neill were permitting the audience to look back with him toward early associations, early parental influences and early impulses to manhood. This is all quite true, so far as it goes, but it does not, as I see it, go far enough. It does not establish the authentic link between this and O'Neill's earlier plays. It does not do O'Neill the honor of considering him as a true poet, one whose inner life is a continuity, whether it be working toward increasing conflict or toward a resolution of conflict and ultimate peace.

The whole significance of O'Neill in the theatre is lost unless we follow this continuous process. It may be nothing more than a process of ebb and flow, or it may be a strong current flowing in one ultimate direction, even though turning and twisting as it encounters this or that obstacle. If "Ah, Wilderness!" is nothing more than a homesick and understanding play of extreme youth, then O'Neill is of no more significance as a writer and poet than a Tarkington, a somewhat mellowed philosopher who looks backward with charity and tolerance and understanding. But if it is a play that represents the first stages of introspection in a mental retreat which started with "Mourning Becomes Electra," then we are witnessing the first of a series of plays which will give the stirring story of a man's soul in every stage of its long pilgrimage.

The apparent peace and calm of "Ah, Wilderness!" will be broken by more plays of turmoil, but plays of a mature perspective. Hitherto, O'Neill has written direct from the inner anguish of the moment. From now on there is more chance that he will write from the view of one who, having passed an important stage in a difficult journey, rests for a while in contemplation of it.

In its more obvious aspects, "Ah, Wilderness!" concerns two days in the life of the Nat Miller family in a "large small-town in Connecticut." More narrowly, it concerns the relations of Nat Miller and his youngest son, Richard, during the crucial moments of the latter's first serious love affair and of his first temptation in the ways of the underworld. Nat Miller (played with distinguished grace and understanding by George Cohan) discovers suddenly, over a Fourth of July holiday, that his son is enamored of radicalism, amorous verse and the youthful daughter of a neighbor and fellow business man. As the play is laid in 1906 the types of radicalism and of verse are not precisely what they would be today, but are the equivalent for the period. A misunderstanding develops between Richard and little Muriel McComber. A college friend of Richard's older brother asks Richard to go out with him and paint the town red. In a rebellious mood, Richard consents, but thanks to his innate decency comes out unscathed from an initiation in the back room of a saloon into the ways of professional ladies. He does, however, drink too much. It is Nat Miller's handling of his son's escapade that furnishes the high light of the play—the spectacle of a curious reticence accompanied by deep devotion and mutual respect. In the end, all is made well between Richard and Muriel, after a scene of tender adolescent emotion on a beach sprinkled with starlight. It is a play that tells with no small insight how a father may make or break his son's life and ideals at an important moment. In the background we see the rather cracked lives of a maiden aunt and a bachelor uncle whose problems were less skilfully and charitably handled. The entire grouping of family characters is admirably worked out to give emphasis to the delicately drawn but strongly intrenched story of father and son.

The Theatre Guild made one of its occasional brilliant decisions in selecting George Cohan for Nat Miller, the mildly successful newspaper editor and publisher. It is George Cohan the artist who acts in the O'Neill play, giving what is surely the richest performance of his long career. Elisha Cook, jr., is admirable as the son. Marjorie Marquis as the mother, Gene Lockhart as the not-good-for-much brother-in-law, Eda Heinemann as Nat Miller's maiden sister, and Ruth Gilbert as Muriel, round out a cast that does full justice to O'Neill in his new mood of retrospection. (At the Guild Theatre.)

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BOOKS

Mystery of Grace

Vipers' Tangle, by François Mauriac; translated by Warre B. Wells. New York: Sheed and Ward. $2.25.

ONE FEELS the dramatic issues of M. Mauriac's latest novel profoundly without being able to state them easily. As is characteristic of the work of the brilliant Catholic Academician, "Vipers' Tangle" is somber, moving and full of meaning; but a chief part of its art lies in its depiction of the mixed movement of life itself, the moral confusions and blindnesses that produce misunderstanding and frustration, the small, accumulating lapses that make for the fateful effect of character upon character, the unpredictable allotment of bad and good. Through it all, it is true, one moves on irresistibly to a judgment, but it is hardly a concrete verdict in favor of one character for moral heroism, or against another for clear crimes and chargeable sins. It is rather one of those august generalizations which alone are large enough to contain the complexity of life, especially as the Christian envisages it. It is, that life consists not of a few dramatic decisions, but of the sum of all its moments.

The darker aspect of this truth is realized by Louis, the chief character, whose journal makes up the book, after a lifetime of avarice and vindictive spite: "I have spent sixty years creating this old man dying of hatred." The more positive aspect is at least implied in the story of the Catholics who surround Louis and are the occasions of his hatred: Catholics who are scrupulously duty-doing and devout within the limits set by routine and contented imagination, but who are wholly uninformed by the creative humility, the vigilance over self, the ardor of love ever renewed by supplication to the Fount of All Love, without which the Christian profession becomes a parody and a scandal. What one learns from "Vipers' Tangle," in brief, is that only the Christianity which is a constant and superhuman struggle, as well as a supernatural one, can avail against the doom of natural life, against the mortal forces that, in the mere process of living, tend to embitter and isolate souls and to encompass all relations with a kind of living death.

It is a subtle and characteristic stroke of M. Mauriac's pen which has made the chief confrontation in this book. There is nothing so obvious here as the base Catholic being judged by the noble atheist; there is, instead, the inadequate Catholic being judged by the base atheist. And the tragedy lies deeper than the triumphant sneers of Louis the unbeliever. It lies in the sorrowful fact that Louis the sinner discerns, albeit dimly, that it is Christianity alone, this thing half-practised by his hated family, which can deliver him from himself. He is not wholly estranged from the Divine doctrine. Its essence comes to him thinly through those around him; and without perceiving the fact, he is tortured and haunted by it, and pressed into a cold, continual anger against those who, by their pusillanimity, refuse him the help it is in their power to give.

It was no cataclysm which originally separated Louis

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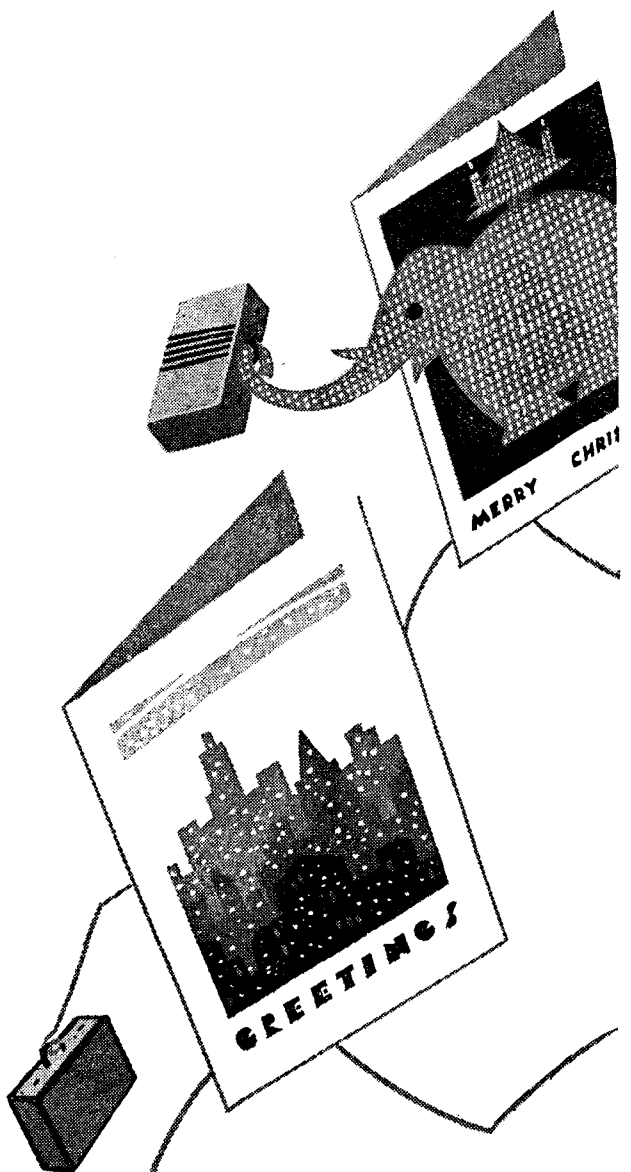

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NEXT WEEK

LABOR AND THE NEW DEAL, by Oliver McKee, jr., Washington correspondent for one of America's leading newspapers and therefore in daily contact with the shaping of events in the national capital, treats from his realistic observations of labor's opportunities and responsibilities in the national recovery. The strike, which is the laboring man's inalienable right to stop work in the face of what he believes to be injustice greater than he can bear, can become a vicious thing when it is dictated by unreasonable greed or laziness. Mr. McKee deals with the problem in its broad relation to the national program. In the following issue of THE COMMONWEAL will be an article which will analyze the labor situation in detail in a particular great industrial center . . . HOW TO HANDLE CATHOLIC NEWS, by Clem Lane, is a brisk and fascinating account of how a great daily secured proper coverage on the manifold activities of men and women whose faith was vital to them, who are living it, doing something about it. The myriad aspects of this life—surely in any sane estimate as important as murders, divorces and dog-bites—is reflected by Mr. Lane's article, as well as the mechanics of reportorial enterprise . . . CHARLEY, by Marion Grubb, is a sketch full of the color, curiosities and humanities of living in a small American community. It is the story of a village idiot who is also the village philanthropist and is alone with that rounded, complete realism that sees human beings and not obsessions . . . SOME HOLY YEAR NOTES FROM ROME, by James W. Lane, reflects the life in one of the great capitals of the world when citizens from every land gather there to express their faith and devotion in a kingdom that has no end . . . A DAY AT AN EXHIBITION, by Alex McGavick, and BELLOC'S FOLLOWERS, by George Beverley, complete the issue with art and literature.

from other human beings. A self-centered law student, of brilliant promise, relentless ambition and no religious beliefs, he is nevertheless young enough and uncorrupted enough at the time of his marriage to be touched and half persuaded by his wife's beliefs. Her prayers, the aura of faith about her, are for a little while the most significant thing that life holds. Disillusionment comes with the knowledge of an earlier though quite innocent love affair of hers; but it is part of the book's verisimilitude that one sees that the form of the disillusionment is accidental. Louis's strong, tormented ego, harsh toward others in proportion as it senses hateful things in itself, could have been only briefly appeased, in any event, by human love; human love, however tender, is mingled with selfishness, and this discovery, to one who desperately needs love's release, is always a tragedy. Only faith can cure such a nature and give it the center it so devouringly demands. Louis was bound to be thrown back upon himself, after the first happiness of marriage, and to wreak his subsequent unhappiness upon those around him.

And hence the pattern of their life is set: they are strangers. Isa takes refuge in her children and her religious devotion—which makes something like a saint of her before the end without, tragically, giving her the enlargement of mind and soul to understand her husband. Louis takes refuge in success, in indulging his hereditary avarice unchecked, in debauchery. He still, at moments, feels the call of forces beyond life: in his secret regard for the saintly abbé who tutors his children; in his love for the only two beings who freely love him, the daughter who dies young, offering up her childish death pangs "for papa," the foster-child Luc, killed in the war. But these are not enough to save him; he passes the last years of his life a bed-ridden old man plotting to avenge himself upon the pious family who have always made him an outsider, by compassing their legal disinheritance.

Only, at the very end, his wife's sudden death breaks him. It brings her near again. In her letters from her confessor he pieces out how constantly she has suffered through him, how often forgiven him; and it is as though the beneficent effect of her love, interrupted for a lifetime, is again resumed. Convictions which he has long resisted, his secret attraction measured by his determined vice and his mirthless contempt, slowly flood his mind at last. He gives up his fortune, the symbol of his selfish will, to his children, for he perceives that "we do not know what we desire. We do not love what we think we love." He begins to comprehend that his lifelong sin has been refusing to others the very human charity he has longed for for himself. But immeasurably beyond that, he comprehends another truth:

"One needed some kind of strength, I said to myself. What kind of strength? Someone.

"Yes, Someone in Whom we are all one, Who would be the guarantor of my victory over myself in the eyes of my family; Someone Who would bear witness for me, Who would have relieved me of my foul burden, Who would have assumed it. . . ."

It is in the key of irony that Mauriac sees everywhere without stressing, that not even in his last days is Louis

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really united to his children. Conscientious, anxious to be just, they are still immovably fixed in their mold of smallness. And when, after his sudden death, his journal is discovered, its earlier record of hatred wholly extinguishes for them the meaning of the final passages. His change of heart is merely the breakdown of his powers; his last tremendous spiritual discovery, merely the "vague religiosity" of a "half-mad" man. It is only Janine, his granddaughter—clumsy, stupid, half-demented by the desertion of the husband she idolizes—who pierces to the truth. Just before he died, Louis had saved her from the family's officious partizanship, and in return she had been taught by suffering to see that "grandfather is the only religious man I have ever met." She alone testifies to the reality of his conversion, and his intended reconciliation with the Church. Touchingly, it is her poor voice which pronounces his Catholic epitaph, at the end of this extraordinary Catholic novel: "Our thought, our desires, our actions, struck no roots in that faith to which we adhered with our lips. With all our strength we were devoted to material things, while grandfather . . . Will you understand me if I tell you that, where his treasure was, there was not his heart also?"

MARY KOLARS.

The Herries Epic

Vanessa, by Hugh Walpole. New York: Doubleday Doran and Company. $2.50.

WITH this book, Mr. Walpole concludes his tetralogy of the Herries family. Vanessa is the great-granddaughter of Rogue Herries, hero of the first book; and the granddaughter of Judith Paris, heroine of the book bearing her name and of "The Fortress." Those who, as the author humorously puts it, "will live long enough and be idle enough to read this tetralogy" will find in "Vanessa" the familiar characteristics of its predecessors. Among these is a masterly portrayal of men and women, related by a blood in which ran two diverse and conflicting strains. Thus the Herries, who considered themselves the "backbone" but not the "head" of England, constantly revert to one of two types. To say that Mr. Walpole makes his "type" individuals readily recognizable as such, yet gives to each a definite distinction, is to point to a major achievement.

The story of Vanessa, despite its great breadth and vitality, does taper to an anti-climax. Instead of bringing it up to the present decade, he should have concluded it with Vanessa's death. Long before that event the unity of the Herries, as a family, became unconvincing. An extensive genealogical chart, wisely included, shows many of the characters in remote consanguinity. London, not the Lake Country, becomes the family's residence, but there is also in "Vanessa" much of the Cumberland which Mr. Walpole loves and describes with such beauty. Indeed he seems to visit dissolution on the family for its desertion of a land whose "strong people have their feet in the soil and are independent of all men."

JOHN GILLAND BRUNINI.

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A Knight of Adventure

The Book of Talbot, by Violet Clifton. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. $3.50.

TALBOT CLIFTON belonged to that ancient English aristocracy which regards the modern peerage with amused contempt. The Cliftons had lived on their vast estates for eight hundred years. They had fought valiantly for king and faith generations before the elevation of the parvenu aristocracy of Elizabeth.

It was from this cultural background that Talbot Clifton, six-feet-four of perfectly made, iron-willed manhood, issued to view the world. Before twenty he had twice made the circuit of the globe. Then came an Alaskan journey; a marvelous expedition through the Barren Lands of Canada with death as a companion; a trek through Africa, replete with dangerous adventures; a long Siberian trip, followed by others to Tibet and Burma, and wanderings through South America, where he met Violet Beauclerk, destined to be his wife and biographer.

The meeting of these two stormy souls, equally proud and imperious, their love, their married life, are told by Mrs. Clifton in "The Book of Talbot" with a sincerity and skill that makes of the story a thing of rare beauty. Not since Emily Brontë in "Wuthering Heights" laid bare the souls of Heathcliff and Catherine has a love of such dramatic intensity been unfolded to the world. It transcends sex and becomes a furnace that refines.

After marriage Talbot Clifton traveled less constantly. During a final trip to Africa his Odyssey ended in death. The story of his lingering illness, of her frantic search for a priest to shrive him, is told by his widow with simple but arresting pathos.

In the lonely lands where Talbot Clifton was at home, men raise a cairn of stones above their dead. In this beautiful book Violet Clifton has raised a cairn for the one she loved. It points upwards, like the cross that tops it. By it Talbot Clifton will be long remembered.

WILL HOLLOWAY.

Confused Symbols

The Martyr, by Liam O'Flaherty. New York: The Macmillan Company. $2.00.

MR. O'FLAHERTY, speaking directly on the subject, has expressed small admiration of the Catholic Church, and the chief character of "The Puritan" was certainly designed to throw no credit to that institution. These facts make it difficult to understand the author's attitude toward the character who gives its name to "The Martyr." Is he intended as a romantic weakling deluded by pantheistic ecstasy into accepting death or as a profound person who draws from his faith strength to help him through a very painful end? From the internal evidence of the book, it is hard to say, for, though Mr. O'Flaherty does not exclude his personal opinions on certain matters, in regard to Brian Crosbie, the martyr, he maintains an unexpected impartiality.

Brian is shown as a dreamer incapable of coming to any decision and when the moment comes to prove his right to the title of Commandant of the Republican forces in Sally-

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town, County Kerry, he cannot act in an overt fashion. Brian is taken prisoner by the Free Staters and turned over to the sadistic Tyson, who preaches and practices the creed of the man of iron. Reading a symbolic meaning into the book, it may be that Tyson stands for the ruthless evil which results from a denial of man's portion of spirit, and that Brian represents the good and the power it can attain by looking beyond the mere physical individual. Or, Tyson may be a symbol of masculine purposiveness, Brian, of feminine vacillation. Perhaps the best clue to the author's attitude toward his hero is the comment of a girl who sees Brian's execution: "It's only a rabbit caught by a weasel." No one admires a weasel or a rabbit, but everyone feels sorry for the rabbit the weasel has caught.

Despite its comparative shortness, "The Martyr's" lesser characters are numerous and clearly drawn. Mr. O'Flaherty's earlier stories were carefully written, but his present style is hurriedly careless, filled with clichès and marred by expository asides.

GEOFFREY STONE.

The Light of Faith

Life and Religion, by Father James, O. M. Cap. St. Louis B. Herder Book Company. $1.75.

FATHER JAMES'S latest volume is composed mainly of lectures addressed to the students of University College, Cork. The purpose of these discourses is to outline the Catholic philosophy of life in terms of the intellectual and practical problems of modern life; to show that Catholicism is a religion "destined to bring to human life a fulness that alone can satisfy the instinct for life that is hidden in the heart of every Christian," and presumably of every man. Thus the author shows that religion alone can explain the meaning of life as a search for truth, goodness, beauty and happiness. He points out the place of religion in education, in the development of personality, in the social order. A chapter entitled "The Christian View of Life" indicates how Revelation, the Incarnation, grace, and the Beatific Vision enter into and complete the human life-scheme. An excellent if terse discussion of "The Sacramental Principle" closes the book.

In general, the modern problems are well stated; and the solution proposed is certainly the true one. Many things which the author says about the incompleteness of a life that is not penetrated with religion, cannot be repeated too often. Yet the book would be still more attractive and satisfying, and would appeal to a wider audience, if it were not so exceedingly "philosophical." The discussion evolves too frequently into a reaffirmation of metaphysical principles, whereas the modern mind is much more interested in an analysis and interpretation of the ideas and desires and feelings and efforts that every man experiences, and that so few understand. One would also have expected that the nature and functions of the Church—"religion with a body"—would find a more extensive place in the Catholic philosophy of life. Perhaps the author has reserved this subject for a subsequent volume which he promises us in his Foreword.

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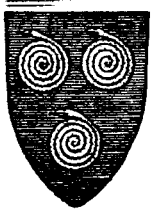
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Briefer Mention

Mandoa, Mandoa!, by Winifred Holtby. New York: The Macmillan Company. $2.50.

THE CLASH of two civilizations provides the theme, the satire and the humor of Winifred Holtby's very brilliant novel which she calls "a comedy of irreverence." This designation she doubtless feels sufficient excuse for her failure to award the laurels. Mandoa, a fictitious African country neatly patterned after Abyssinia, has been shut off from the world and has perpetuated its ancient customs. Talil, her Lord High Chamberlain, however, longs for the modern—cinemas, bath tubs, airplane routes, etc. These he is given through Prince's Tours, an English agency which specializes in the bizarre and the dangerous. But the effete of England, who are attracted to a highly publicized Mandoa, are none too interested in Lolaboga, the capital city, once it is schooled into at least an outward conference with European mores. Nor are the Mandoans altogether impressed by the logic of these mores. Miss Holtby, choosing her material for her purposes, brings a keen imagination to play on a kaleidescopic scene which always she imparts with vivid and teeming life. She pricks the Mandoan bubble but not before she has given her reader rich, overabundant fare.

Wonder Hero, by J. B. Priestley. New York: Harper and Brothers. $2.50.

IN this lampooning of the exploitation by newspapers of the pseudo-celebrity, there are intimations of tragedy. Such exploitation is merely a part of the wild scramble for circulation which certain publishers promote. Mr. Priestley's satire is constantly telling. His "Wonder Hero" is not even a hero. Charlie Habble was willy-nilly made the saviour of a town where explosives factories presented a constant danger. Yet the *Tribune* of London waved incense before him, lodged him at a super-luxurious hotel, introduced him to radio and newsreel audiences and then— The effect of a fleeting notoriety on Habble is the real theme. Satire, tragedy and romance are blended to make "Wonder Hero" a book over which one can laugh or rail against modern heartlessness.

CONTRIBUTORS

HENRY CARTER is a student of international relations and has served seven years with the United States Department of State.
EDWARD I. WATKIN has contributed essays to "A Monument of St. Augustine" and "The English Way" and is the author of "The Bow in the Cloud" of the "Essays in Order" series. He is also well known as a translator and is at present engaged on a work of his own aiming at a synthesis of philosophies.
LOUIS GOLDING is the author of "Magnolia Street."
ROBERT WHITCOMB contributes articles to current periodicals.
FRANCES FROST is the author of "These Acres."
ELMER MURPHY writes on political and economic topics.
FRANCES HALL is a California poet.
THEODORE MAYNARD, poet and critic, is the author of many books, of which the latest is "Preface to Poetry."
HELENE MULLINS is a New York poet.
MARGUERITE WRZESIEN is a Polish writer.
JOHN GILLAND BRUNINI, poet and critic, contributes to current periodicals and is the author of "The Mysteries of the Rosary."
WILL HOLLOWAY contributes fiction, special articles and criticism to various magazines.
GEOFFREY STONE is a writer of criticism for newspapers and reviews.
REV. WILLIAM GRANGER RYAN is a priest of the Diocese of Brooklyn, N. Y.

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